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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XX, Issue No. 5 | THURSDAY JANUARY 7, 2010 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you plan to attend any of the inauguration events scheduled next week?

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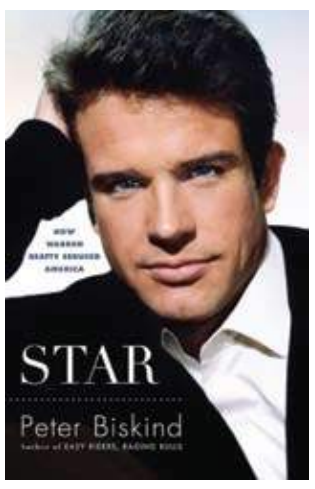
INSIDE

Nexus One

Google unveiled its plans to sell its own cell phone in its latest bid to upstage Apple's iPhone.

BUSINESS...Page 16



Sex Record

A new biography of Warren Beatty hasn't even hit bookstore shelves yet but it's already caused an uproar

LIFE & STYLE...Page 19

Admin wants annual registration of aliens

- Over 130 comments on DHS worker rules
- Comment period ends tomorrow, Jan. 8

DEFINITION

Alien: Any person who is not a citizen, national, permanent resident of the United States, or a CNMI permanent resident as provided by Trust Territory or Commonwealth law.

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

ON THE NET

www.regulations.gov

The Fitial administration wants an annual registration of every alien who remains in the CNMI for over 90 days under the U.S. law that placed CNMI immigration under federal control.

This is among the changes to Public Law 110-229 or the federalization law that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, through his special counsel Howard P. Willens, is proposing to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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SINE DIE

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Six of the nine members of the 16th Senate pose for a group photo right after adjourning *sine die* yesterday afternoon on Capital Hill. From left, Senate Floor Leader Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian), Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan), Senate Vice President Felix T. Mendiola (Cov-Rota), Senate President Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan), Sen. Maria "Frica" T. Pangelinan (D-Saipan), and Sen. Henry H. San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian). Mendiola and Pangelinan, who did not seek re-election, won't be in the 17th Senate, which will hold its organizational session on Monday at 10am. ***See story on Page 3***

OF 105 POSTS, ONLY 55 ARE FILLED

Public schools still has 50 more vacancies

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

RELATED NEWS

- PSS: Schools will be OK with $34M budget. **PAGE 5**

Several positions remain vacant at the Public School System this fiscal year after only half of the needed positions were filled to date, according to federal pro-

See SCHOOLS on Page 4

$13M in CIP funds for CUC's projects

Malae

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The CNMI government has approved the release of $13 million for various Commonwealth Utilities Corp. projects this fiscal year.

Saipan Tribune learned that the money will be sourced from Capi-

See CUC on Page 4

'Only 69 candidates file reports on time'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Only 69 of the 110 candidates in the Nov. 7 general elections filed their campaign statement of account on time or by the Dec. 28 deadline.

Six additional candidates filed their campaign reports since then.

Public Auditor Michael Pai said yesterday that as of

See CANDIDATES on Page 4

Man gets 90-day sentence in crash that killed his wife. **PAGE 2**

1,000 people homeless on Solomons after tsunami. **PAGE 7**

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Local

Man gets 90-day sentence in crash that killed his wife

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a 90-day prison term on the man who was involved in a 2008 car crash that killed his wife.

"This case represents the most unfortunate situation in which an entire family's livelihood is devastated because of the deadly combination of consuming alcohol and operating a motor vehicle," said associate judge Ramona V. Manglona in sentencing Young Cheon Kim.

The 42-year-old Kim is suffering from serious depression and post-traumatic stress disorder due to the loss of his wife, Young Kyung Lee.

In the written order she issued Tuesday, Manglona ordered Kim to spend 90 days in prison for driving under the influence of alcohol. Kim was also required to pay a $500 fine, a $25 court assessment fee, and a $100 probation fee.

Manglona suspended Kim's driver's license for 30 days with no privileges.

Kim will be placed on a one-year probation, but it will be terminated upon his departure from the CNMI within 30 days of his release from prison.

The judge said Kim shall continue with his counseling even while incarcerated and shall not consume or possess any alcoholic beverages. She prohibited him from entering any bars.

A review hearing was set for May 17, 2010 at 1:30pm—unless Kim has already voluntarily departed from the Commonwealth.

The case arose from a Nov. 29, 2008, incident when the Ford Taurus that Kim was driving swerved along Beach Road and slammed into the concrete fence of a residential compound in Oleai, killing Lee, who was his passenger.

Lee suffered whiplash injury and a crushed chest. Kim himself also suffered serious injuries. The couple has two daughters, who were 15 and 11 years old at the time of the accident.

Police arrested Kim and charged him with driving on right side of highway-exceptions, exceeding maximum speed limit, reckless driving with bodily injuries and property damage, driving while under the influence of alcohol, and homicide by vehicle.

At his arraignment, Kim pleaded not guilty but he later signed a plea agreement with the government. On Dec. 3, 2009, he pleaded guilty to driving under the influence of alcohol, with a Blood Alcohol Concentration of .08 percent or more.

According to court papers, Kim and Lee were married for over 15 years. When the accident happened the couple were working for the Saipan World Resort.

Kim has no prior criminal history, or any history of domestic violence.

Since the crash, Kim has been undergoing counseling to address the impact of the incident on him and his family.

The loss of his wife by his hands has caused him tremendous grief, remorse, and self-recrimination. He has been in a difficult position of being the only parent for his two daughters who are also dealing with the loss and grief following the death of their mother.

The family's financial situation has taken a serious toll on all of them. While the case was pending in court, Kim resigned from his work.

The daughters have since returned to Korea to be cared by family. Kim intends to reunite with them after he complies with any sentence imposed on him.

In this case, Manglona said, the prosecution and defense counsel Robert Torres agreed that the factual basis for the plea is punishment only.

Manglona said the jail sentence complies with the minimum mandatory prison term required of a vehicular homicide conviction.

Based on the presentence report, Kim has remained sober since the accident, and does not use or abuse illicit drugs.

"Furthermore, defendant's anticipated departure from the Commonwealth will ensure that he will not pose any future harm to anyone else," Manglona said.

Charges filed vs 24 Chinese who attempted to enter Guam by boat

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. government filed separate charges yesterday against 24 Chinese nationals who were arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents on Tuesday for allegedly trying to enter Guam illegally using a boat.

Jian Li, 32, male, and Qingmei Cheng, 28, female, were indicted on 22 counts of attempting to bring aliens to the U.S.

The U.S. Attorney's Office filed separate information charging the 22 other defendants with one count each of attempted improper entry by an alien.

The defendants are Junhua Chen, Xiaoyan Chen, Jian Dong, Wenjun Huo, Shi Guang Li, Ping Liu, Weili Liu, Yong Jun Li, Jian Bo Yang, Zhighuo Lu, Dong Wang, and Dongxiang Wang. The 10 others are Qingxu Wang, Shiying Wei, Jingkai Yu, Yi Wu, Yibin Zheng, Junyan Zhang, Lei Xu, Zhaohai Zheng, Weikun Zhong, and Bo Zhou.

During late Tuesday afternoon's hearing, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson set no bail "at this time" for all defendants.

As of press time, the arraignment was still ongoing.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement special agent Blu Aisho Shiroma stated in his affidavit that on Tuesday, he arrested the defendants upon probable cause that they attempted to unlawfully enter the U.S.

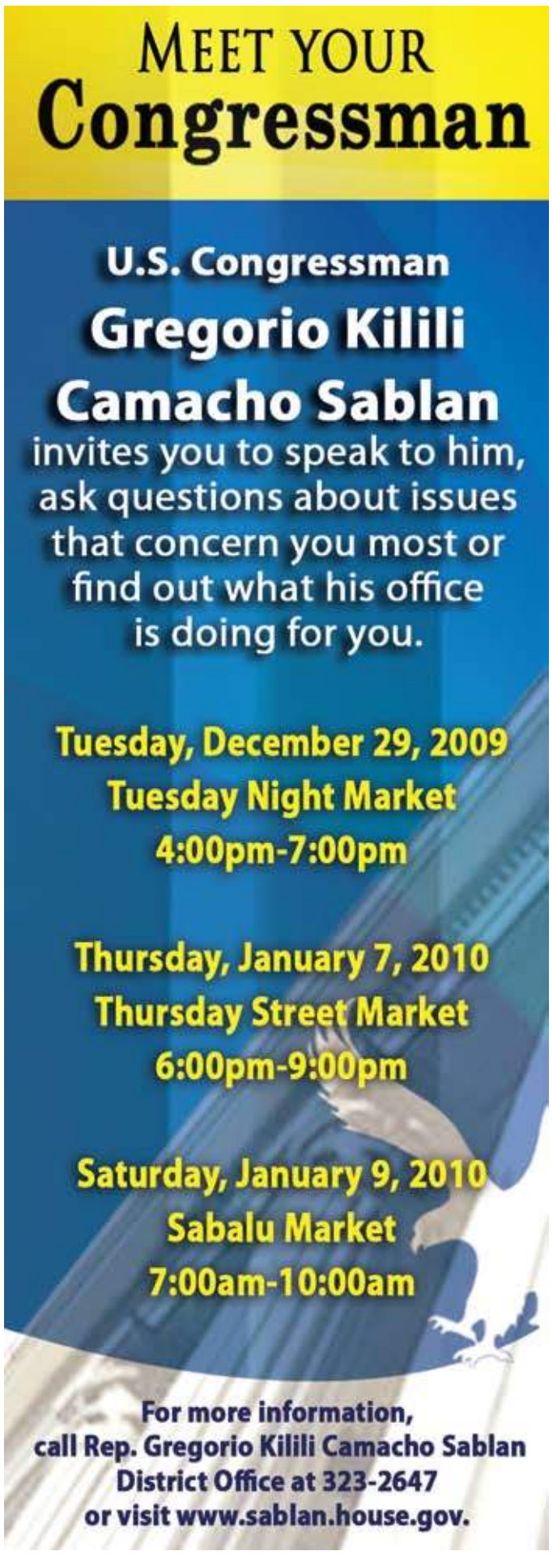
Shiroma said that on that day, Tuesday, the defendants met with an undercover ICE agent and boarded a boat with the intent to illegally enter Guam. Shiroma said the defendants believed that the boat would be driven by the undercover agent in order to smuggle them into Guam.

The special agent said that on Saipan on Nov. 6, Dec. 2, Dec. 17, 2009, and Jan. 4, 2010, the undercover agent met the defendants who wanted to smuggle themselves to Guam.

At these meetings, Shiroma said, the undercover agent negotiated plans with the defendants to smuggle them from Saipan to Guam by boat in exchange for money.

Shiroma said the undercover agent made it clear to the defendants that it was illegal for them to enter Guam.

The agent's affidavit did not mention the specific location where the defendants boarded the boat and where they were arrested.



DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH
HEALTH AND WELL BEING
How is your baby growing?
If your child displays any of the following signs of possible developmental delay, talk to your doctor, nurse, or other health care provider about it:
Developmental Health Watch
4 to 7 Months
Seems very stiff, with tight muscles
Head still flops back when body is pulled to a sitting position
Does not like to cuddle
Shows no affection for the person who cares for him or her
Doesn't seem to enjoy being around people
Persistent tearing, eye drainage, or sensitivity to light
Does not respond to sounds around him or her
Has difficulty getting objects to mouth
Does not roll over in either direction (front to back or back to front) by 5 months
Seems impossible to comfort at night after 5 months
Cannot sit with help by 6 months
Does not laugh or make squealing sounds by 6 months
Does not actively reach for objects by 6 to 7 months
Does not follow objects with both eyes at near (1 foot) and far (6 feet) ranges by 7 months
Does not bear weight on legs by 7 months
Does not try to attract attention through actions by 7 months
Experiences a dramatic loss of skills he or she once had
Learn the Signs. Act Early.
You may also contact the Children's Developmental Assistance Center (C*DAC) at
664-4830
for a FREE developmental screening!
Information adapted from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, Learn the Signs. Act Early.
Supported in part by project H25MC06112 from the MCHB (Title V, Social Security Act), HRSA, DHHS.
Big Steps for Little Feet

Senate mirrors House override of Fitial's veto on bill

First law in 2010 designates Lau Lau Bay as new boat launching site

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A bill designating Lau Lau Bay as a new boat launching site for quicker response times for emergencies has become the CNMI's first law in 2010 when the Senate overrode yesterday Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's veto of House Bill 16-219, HD1.

The Senate's 6-0 vote came a day after the Republican-dominated 16th House of Representatives also overrode the Covenant governor's veto of the bill, which lawmakers have described as one that "save lives."

Senate President Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan) said the bill automatically becomes law after a House and Senate override of a governor's veto.

"I'm so happy that it became law," House Vice Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), author of H.B. 16-219, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

He said the actions by the House and the Senate reiterate the importance of designating Lau Lau Bay as a new boat launching site to facilitate quicker response times for emergencies in the eastern coastline of Saipan.

Some senators, however, echoed one of two reasons that Fitial cited in vetoing the bill—that of directing certain administrative actions by agencies within the Executive Branch without identifying resources.

But Deleon Guerrero said "designating an area as a boat launching site does not require additional funding."

In yesterday's Senate session, outgoing Sen. Maria "Frica" Pangelinan (D-Saipan) registered her support for the bill's intent but expressed hope that necessary funding will be pooled to ensure that the new boat launching site—along with similar existing facilities such as the Smiling Cove Marina and the Sugar Dock—meets all safety standards.

All other senators present—including Sen. Felix Mendiola (Cov-Rota), Floor Leader Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian), and Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan)—also registered their support for the bill, citing safety and livelihood concerns.

They said besides facilitating quick response time for emergencies, the designation of a new boat launching site also helps save money for boat fuel and time for fishermen who fish in the Lau Lau Bay.

The new boat launching site is located adjacent to Forbidden Island, Tank Beach, and Marine Beach.

Fitial disapproved Deleon Guerrero's bill on Dec. 14, citing a potential for increased liability against the CNMI and lack of identified resources in the bill.

Sine die

Before the 16th Senate adjourned *sine die*, Reyes gave the five other senators present time to say a few words.

Sen. Felix Mendiola (Cov-Rota), who didn't seek re-election, thanked his colleagues and the Legislative Bureau staff for their "collaboration" and "camaraderie."

"As an outgoing senator, I feel enriched by the challenges and the rewards that came with the job. This experience is something I will cherish all my life," he told his colleagues.

Pangelinan, the chair of the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee, which proposed to institute cost-cutting measures to avoid further deficit, couldn't hold back tears as she also thanked her fellow senators and the LB staff.

"This is really emotional for me… I am going to miss you as individuals," said Pangelinan, who also did not seek re-election after a four-year term that she said has been "memorable." Pangelinan said she will be going to Arizona.

Pangelinan served lunch at her office after the Senate session.

Hofschneider, who got re-elected and will become vice president in the 17th Senate, said four years ago, he didn't have white hair but he said changes for the betterment of residents have since come with those changes in his features.

Sen. Henry H. San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian), who will be on the 17th Legislature, spoke in the vernacular and also expressed appreciation to his colleagues in the 16th Legislature and the LB staff.

Crisostimo said he would miss Mendiola and Pangelinan, whom he looks up to.

"I hope the challenges we face today will be met by the 17th. The 16th is strong," he said.

Reyes, for his part, said each Legislature becomes a family. "It's very difficult to say goodbye to a family. But this is the nature of the job we chose," he said, adding that Pangelinan has become a mentor to him.

"I learned so much from her perseverance and intensity in absorbing details, the meticulous work she has as chair of the Fiscal Affairs Committee. To Senator Felix, you will always be in my heart. We go a long way back… I admire your integrity…I am also going to miss the chair here," he said, referring to the Senate president's seat in the chamber.

But he said he looks forward to working with incoming Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota).

Under excused absence in the session yesterday were Manglona, Sen. Paterno Hocog (R-Rota), and Sen. Joseph Mendiola (Cov-Tinian).

The Senate adjourned *sine die* at 1:13pm.

Senate honors 4 deceased individuals

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The outgoing 16th Senate adopted three commemorative resolutions and one resolution honoring four deceased individuals for their contributions to the CNMI.

Before adjourning Sine Die, senators adopted Senate Commemorative Resolution 16-11, conveying condolences and sympathy to the bereaved family of former House Speaker Vicente "Pacho" M. Sablan.

The senators also paid tribute to Sablan's "vast contributions" in serving the CNMI people.

"It is extremely difficult to find a person who shares the same degree of passion and devotion toward public service like that of the late Honorable Vicente Masga Sablan "Pacho," a man who selflessly dedicated his entire life to his family and serving the Commonwealth," the senators said in SCR 16-11.

Sablan worked as assistant manager and manager of the former Saipan Credit Union which was renamed the CNMI Credit Union, and was an administrative officer of the Peace Corps from 1976 to 1980.

He served in the 2nd to 6th Legislatures as a member of the House of Representatives. He was the House speaker in the 4th Legislature.

Sablan also put up Ben M. Sablan and Sons, which provides consulting services and produces local products upon his retirement from government service.

In yesterday's session, the Senate also adopted Senate Commemorative Resolution 16-12, conveying condolences and sympathy to the family of the late Osaky Keller.

SCR 16-12 also pays tribute to Keller's service to students at Hopwood Junior High School and the CNMI people.

Keller served as chair of Hopwood Junior High School's Social Studies Department for 10 years, and was named CNMI Teacher of the Year in 1990.

He also served as a pastor and organizer for the Pohnpeian community on Saipan.

Senators also adopted Senate Commemorative Resolution 16-13, conveying condolences and sympathy to the family of the late Antonio M. Borja of Tinian, and paying tribute to his service to the CNMI.

Borja served at the Department of Public Safety on Tinian in 1984 until his retirement in 2001 as a captain. He also served on the Commonwealth Development Authority board of directors, and was deeply involved in youth and adult sports on Tinian.

Senators also adopted yesterday Senate Resolution 16-50, which conveys condolences to the family of the late Roque Abel "Naki" S. Celis.

S.R. 16-50 also pays tribute to Celis's personal accomplishments and contributions to the CNMI people, particularly the CNMI Little League programs.

For more than six years, Celis tabulated the Little League's statistics. The resolution states that Celis became an asset to the CNMI Little League program and will be missed by the baseball and softball community.

Only six senators were present yesterday. All of them voted in favor of each of the four resolutions.

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ADMIN

From Page 1

The Fitial administration is among the entities that have so far posted over 130 comments on DHS' interim final rule on the CNMI Transitional Worker Classification, which was reopened for public comment on Dec. 10.

Jan. 8 is the last day to submit comments.

The interim final rule seeks to create a new CNMI-only transitional worker, or "CW," classification intended to be effective during the transition period ending Dec. 31, 2014.

Willens said these comments are in addition to those submitted earlier on DHS' interim final rule.

Among the changes proposed is the addition of a new Part 1 (Registration) under "Citizenship."

"Every alien who remains in the Commonwealth longer than 90 days shall by regulation be required to be registered. Registration may be renewable annually. The parents or legal guardians of aliens under the age of 18 are responsible for such child's registration," Willens said.

Local agencies

Willens said such registration should be conducted by the CNMI Department of Labor, CNMI Department of Commerce, and the CNMI Office of the Attorney General, depending on the classification of the aliens.

For example, the registration of aliens who are qualified to work in the CNMI, those who are religious ministers and missionaries and work on the islands, and those aliens who are immediate relatives of aliens qualified to reside in the CNMI shall be conducted by Labor.

Registration of aliens who are investors, business owners or students qualified to reside in the CNMI shall be conducted by Commerce, while registration of all other aliens qualified to reside on the islands shall be conducted by the attorney general.

"Such registration information as the registration authorities may require, including but not limited to fingerprints, is confidential and may be made available only on request of law enforcement authorities in connection with criminal or juvenile delinquency investigations," Willens said.

He defines "alien" as any person who is not a citizen, national, permanent resident of the United States, or a CNMI permanent resident as provided by Trust Territory or Commonwealth law.

Fitial had said that his administration has no qualms about the federal government taking over local immigration, but not CNMI labor.

Willens is also proposing that aliens be issued an identification card, which will indicate date of expiration and nonimmigrant class, as well as such other information, including photographs, as may be required.

Under the proposal, any alien who fails to comply with the registration may be found guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than 90 days, or fined by up to $500 or both.

In the Fitial administration's original comment on DHS' interim final rule, Willens said DHS should not implement the interim rule on the CNMI-Transitional Worker Classification on Nov. 28 as it is deficient for many reasons.

Two days prior to federalization, a federal judge issued a preliminary injunction preventing DHS from implementing the regulations on Nov. 28, to give the public enough time to comment, as required by the Administrative Procedures Act.

Two weeks later, DHS reopened and extended for another 30 days the public comment period for the interim final rule as published in the Dec. 10 Federal Register. The comment period will remain open until Jan. 8, 2010.

A majority of the comments received so far by DHS came from nonresidents, many of them asking the federal government to grant a more permanent immigration status for nonresidents in the CNMI. Many of them ask for "green card" or legal permanent residency status under U.S. immigration laws.

Some comments deal with other specific concerns, including a DHS waiver of application fees.

Rocky Samaniego, a nonresident, said the application fee for the Form I-129 is "very costly" and many employers may not be able to afford it.

"Plus the fact that if ever we have achieved already a status here as CW-1 and exit Saipan for vacation, business or emergencies, we again have to get a U.S. visa from home origin which would be another round of fees," Samaniego said.

Xiaoli Qian, a nonresident worker from China since 2002, wishes that "all long-term guest workers" get U.S. immigration status.

Serajul Islam, also a nonresident, asked whether a CW-1 visa be changed into an H visa in the near future. "It is not addressed anywhere in the regulations," Islam said.

DHS' U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services earlier said that it will consider all comments received during the public comment period of Oct. 27, 2009 to Jan. 8, 2010, in developing its final transitional worker rule.

The interim final rule is available for public comment at www.regulations.gov. To find this rule on regulations.gov, search under the docket number USCIS-2008-0038.

DHS is establishing a Transitional Worker Visa category, a new nonimmigrant visa classification under the Immigration and Nationality Act using the admission code CW-1 for the principal transitional worker and CW-2 for dependents. "CW" stands for "Commonwealth transitional worker."

A "transitional worker" is defined as an alien worker who is currently ineligible for another classification under the INA and who performs services or labor for an employer in the CNMI.

Under the CNMI-Only Transitional Worker program, employers may file a petition for a transitional worker with USCIS using Form I-129CW, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker in the CNMI.

The Form I-29CW is a modified form of the Form I-29, but it is specifically used for the Commonwealth-only Transitional Worker program.

The fee for Form I-129CW would be $320, the same amount charged for the I-129, and an $80 biometrics fee.

In addition, the Consolidated Natural Resources Act mandates a "CNMI education funding fee" of $150 per beneficiary per year, which cannot be waived.

A. Samoa home rebuilding to start

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—Construction of permanent homes in American Samoa for those affected by the last September's earthquake and tsunami is scheduled to begin next week.

Gov. Togiola Tulafono says the construction for the permanent housing programme is for families who chose to have the Federal Emergency Management Agency contractors build their houses.

CANDIDATES

From Page 1

Jan. 6, a total of 75 candidates filed their campaign statement of accounts.

"Four candidates filed after the deadline without an approved extension request from the Commonwealth Election Commission. (The Office of the Public Auditor) received 32 approved requests for extension of the deadline from CEC, of which two have filed as of January 6, 2010," Pai told Saipan Tribune.

Election Commission executive director Robert A. Guerrero, in a phone interview yesterday, said the commission will make public the campaign statements of account filed next week.

The deadline for filing campaign statement of account for those who ran in the CNMI's first gubernatorial runoff election on Nov. 23 -- Covenant Party's Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos and the Republican Party's Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios – is on Jan. 12.

Of the 69 who filed their campaign reports by the deadline, most of them or 43 candidates filed theirs on the last day of the filing on Dec. 28.

The first one to file their campaign statement of account for the last general elections was Board of Education vice chair Herman Guerrero, on Nov. 12.

The statement of account must show details of any contribution worth at least $500 received during the election period. Contributions include any monetary or in-kind support issued to a candidate to help his or her political bid.

A candidate or political party will be assessed a penalty of $100 for each calendar day the report is late.

A person who violates the requirements for filing shall, upon conviction, be fined up to $50,000 or imprisoned for up to one year, or both.

CUC

From Page 1

tal Improvement Project 702 funds and local funds for Fiscal Year 2010.

The total amount will be used for 15 projects on three islands: five on Saipan, two on Tinian, and eight on Rota.

On Saipan, five projects are allocated $5.6 million, with $2 million assigned to the Water Task Force for its various projects.

A total of $2 million will be used for the Agingan sewer treatment rehabilitation, with $1.4 million sourced from CIP money and $578,000 from local funds.

Two projects in Sadog Tasi are budgeted for $1.525 million, with $525,000 described as for use in Sadog Tasi rehabilitation and $500,000 for Sadig Tasi rehabilitation completion. Another $500,000 is allocated for sewer collection and lift station rehabilitation.

On Tinian, two projects are budgeted for $2.7 million in FY 2010. These include $1.5 million for the repair of a water reservoir and $1.2 million for the San Jose Village homestead utilities.

A status report on CUC's projects indicate that work on the Tinian water reservoir is moving forward as the design contract has already been awarded. Meantime, the scope of work for the homestead utilities project awaits the review of the Tinian delegation.

On Rota, eight projects are lined up for completion this fiscal year, totaling $4.7 million. All CIP and local funds for these projects are intended for the power facility improvement on the island, including $500,000 for the major overhaul of a Mitsue engine.

At present, a request for quotation has already been sent out to potential vendors and was filed for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency category exclusion.

CUC Rota will also tap $640,000 for a new Caterpillar engine. To date, CUC is awaiting a firm price quotation from Caterpillar distributor Hawthorne and bid documents were also prepared in case Hawthorne is unable to supply the engine.

Saipan Tribune was told that the bid announcement is set on Jan. 19.

Another $100,000 is assigned for one more Caterpillar engine and a power module for $600,000.

CUC Rota is also badly in need of a utility bucket truck and the government approved $300,000 for this purpose as well as $1.4 million for electrical distribution. Both bids are scheduled for announcement later this month.

For Rota homestead utilities, a total of $1.2 million is assigned for the construction of a new 13.8 kilovolt line between As Nieves to Dugi areas.

CUC Rota has three power engines but only one is supplying power to the two feeders at present.

CUC has been under a state of emergency since 2008 as a result of the poor condition of its power facilities, sewer system, and water connections.

'Three to 36-month completion'

CUC deputy director Abe Utu Malae told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that all projects are targeted for completion from three to 36 months from now.

CUC earlier said it needs at least three years to turn around the utility corporation in terms of improving its operation.

Malae described the process of getting approval on the projects as "a long process" that takes numerous approvals, reviews, and even opinions to get things done.

Malae said the list of projects is now beyond the "wish list stage" and are all doable, with the exception of the homestead projects on Tinian and Rota.

"With the economy shrinking, it is not a good idea to install water and power service lines and then just have them sit there unused. Water sitting inside pipes will just go stagnant. Energizing unused transformers is wasteful, it is better to use the homestead funds at this time for other critical projects such as waste oil management, and then come back later to the homesteads when the economy improves and people and businesses start moving in to the communities," Malae said.

Malae said the rehabilitation of the sewage treatment plants protect public health and the environment and the same goes for replacing collapsed sewer lines.

Reservoirs, he added, are needed on Tinian to increase water storage while the Rota power plant is struggling to supply Rota with power and purchasing power from a private company there is costly.

SCHOOLS

From Page 1

grams officer Tim Thornburgh.

Of the 105 positions that will be funded by the federal State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, only 55 have been filled, most of them classroom teachers, Thornburgh told the Board of Education during its last meeting.

He said PSS needs to ratchet up its recruitment process in order to fill all the vacant positions, or the fund may be reprogrammed for other purposes.

As of December 2009, PSS had 564 teachers.

Thornburgh said the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund grant would greatly help PSS in retaining and maintaining its teacher workforce.

"We have two years to spend this grant and it would help the school system to recruit and retain our workforce," he told the board.

Allocation

The CNMI stands to receive $44.4 million under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Of the amount, $32.3 million is for PSS while $3.9 million will go to the Northern Marianas College. The rest, $8 million, will go to the Office of the Governor.

The funding is intended to enable PSS to replace and restore 105 teacher and counselor positions that were eliminated in the last four years due to budget cuts. About $12 million of the grant will also be used to repair, renovate, and modernize the CNMI's 20 public schools.

In November 2009, PSS received an initial $24.3 million of the $44.4 million it expects to get.

Restored posts

Based on the CNMI application, which was approved in June 2009, the 105 positions that will be restored include 67 classroom teacher posts, 19 school counselors, five school librarians, three teacher assistants, and other technical positions.

The application paper indicated that Garapan Elementary School will fill eight positions, including two school counselors and six classroom teachers; Hopwood Junior High School needs two school counselors and four classroom teachers; Marianas High School wants to hire a counselor and six classroom teachers; and Saipan Southern High School needs six additional personnel, including 4 classroom teachers for its technical education program.

In alternative education, nine positions were approved for hiring, including three school counselors, three classroom teachers, and three teacher assistants or instructors.

For the technology data systems, positions to be hired include management information officer and information technology specialists.

Besides the replacement posts, over 3,000 brand new laptops will also be purchased using the same funding grant for the system's One Laptop Per Child project.

Thornburgh said PSS had already placed the orders for the students' laptops.

DOC, Juvenile Detention Unit 'unify' management

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The departments of Corrections and Community and Cultural Affairs have inked a memorandum of agreement to strengthen the management of DOC and the Juvenile Detention Unit.

Corrections Commissioner Dolores M. Aldan and DCCA Secretary Melvin L. Faisao signed the agreement on Dec. 21, 2009. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial approved it that same day, as shown in the copy of the agreement obtained by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Under the agreement, the management of the Juvenile Detention Unit shall report to the Corrections commissioner.

The commissioner shall work closely with the DCCA secretary so that the rehabilitation aspect of the Juvenile Detention Unit is maintained and strengthened. The commissioner shall also periodically report progress to the governor and DCCA secretary.

The commissioner shall submit a detailed report six months after the agreement is executed, which include the progress made, issues arising and how such issues have been addressed, and recommendation on changes to the law arising from the agreement.

In a phone interview, Aldan said the agreement is Fitial's commitment to make sure that Corrections and the Juvenile Detention Unit are effectively and efficiently operating the way they're supposed to.

Corrections and DCCA both have custodian responsibilities. The Juvenile Detention Unit is under DCCA.

Corrections exclusively concentrates on custodian responsibilities, while DCCA has a wide range of responsibilities in other non-custodial areas through its various operating divisions.

PSS: Schools will be OK with $34M budget

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Financial managers of the Public School System believe that all its 20 schools will be able to operate at a manageable level this fiscal year, despite the continuing budget ceiling of $34.6 million for both personnel and all others.

PSS acting comptroller Lori Grizzard and financial consultant Ed Tenorio expressed hope, though, that the incoming 17th Legislature will support the proposed $38 million budget for public schools.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial had proposed a $38 million budget for the school system in Fiscal Year 2010. This was cut by the Legislature to $34.6 million. However, the Legislature adjourned its final session this week without further action on the budget, leaving it up to the incoming lawmakers to pass the bill.

During the Board of Education's last meeting, Grizzard reported that PSS' payroll costs amount to almost $1 million every pay period. If the trend remains, she predicts the system will be able cope and stay within the current budget allocation.

She pointed out, though, that she has been seeing a significant increase in the schools' utilities billing and emphasized the need for schools to closely monitor their utility consumption.

For the November cycle alone, PSS was billed a total of $283,000—a 25 percent increase compared to the previous record, she said.

Tenorio reported that of the $34 million continuing budget for PSS, $32 million was sourced from the general fund while $2 million is the schools' share of Compact impact money.

Lowest budget

In his presentation to the board, Tenorio said that if PSS gets $34.6 million in FY 2010, this would be the smallest appropriation for the system in the last six years.

He disclosed that PSS was allocated $37.2 million in FY 2005, a time when the CNMI's budget was at $217.5 million.

The system got the same $37.2 million in FY 2006 when the general budget slightly dropped to $196.9 million.

In FY 2007, PSS received $36.7 million as a result of declining government revenues, set at only $159 million.

The figure went down to $35.8 million in FY 2008 even as the CNMI budget dropped to $158 million.

In FY 2009, PSS was appropriated $34.6 million, even as the general budget for the government dropped to $148 million.

This fiscal year, the PSS is under continuing resolution, which means it is budgeted based on the last approved budget of $34.6 million.

FLORES TWINS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Francine Monique Flores Albuen and Franklin Jeremy Flores Pangelinan, who are both celebrating their birthdays today. Greetings come from your family, most especially your Mommy and Daddy.

GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NOTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS BEFORE THE COMMISIONER OF INSURANCE.

JOHN HANCOCK LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
Applicant

In the Matter of the Application for Withdrawal and to Permanently Discontinue the Transaction of Insurance Business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Pursuant to 20 NMIAC §20-40. 1-210

Notice is hereby given that John Hancock Life Insurance Company of 601 Congress Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02210, intends to withdraw and to permanently discontinue the transaction of insurance business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Effective December 31, 2009, John Hancock Life Insurance Company will cease to exist as a separate entity as a result of a merger with its affiliate, John Hancock Life Insurance Company (U.S.A.), which is the surviving insurer.

All persons interested in this matter should write to the Company at the above address or call 617-663-2486 or the Office of the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance, Department of Commerce at Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. 664-3000.

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Agana Shopping Center
IT&E
Life in Motion

Zoning awaits board decision on junk car campaign

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Zoning Office has yet to start its junk-car campaign pending a decision by the zoning board, which is scheduled to meet in the middle of this month.

Therese Ogumoro, acting Zoning administrator, confirmed yesterday that, although a request for proposals has been issued to solicit bids from companies that want to take on the job of ridding the island of junk cars, a final selection hasn't been made yet.

The board, she said, may take action on the RFP in its regular meeting on Jan. 14. She hinted, though, that the board may also call for a special meeting before Jan. 14 to act on the matter.

Saipan Tribune learned that the RFP was closed on Jan. 4. The Zoning Office has not disclosed how many firms participated in the process.

After the board's decision, the Zoning Office will formally inform the public about the official start of the "zero tolerance on junk cars" campaign.

Saipan has an estimated 18,000-plus junk cars scattered around the island, a big bulk of which is believed located in Chalan Kanoa.

To keep roads safe and the environment free of these eyesores, the Zoning Office announced last month that it will enforce an intensive drive against junk cars.

The campaign will start on main roads: Beach Road, Middle Road, and the back road. After cleaning the major thoroughfares, the search will expand to villages and communities.

In an earlier statement, Zoning administrator Victor Barrett had said the zero-tolerance program will start Jan. 1, in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety and at least four salvage companies that will pick up the "trash" at no cost to the government.

"We will ask these salvage companies to be approved by the DEQ and will assign the cars to them. They will come and pick the cars up for scrap or recycling but they have to incur the cost of pickup and disposal of all the parts," Barrett had explained.

The implementation of the program is part of the zoning agency's mission to eliminate the effects of the accumulation of damaged and inoperable vehicles, which create blight, depress property values, generate health hazards, contribute to injury, damage the environment, provide breeding areas for pests such as rodents, hornets and mosquitoes, attract illegal dumping of other solid waste and hazardous substances, and lead to a decline in property values.

Parent of SpEd child counters PSS findings

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Allan B. Vila, the father of a special-needs child at Oleai Elementary School, has countered the findings of the Public School System in his complaint about the lack of related services for his 8-year-old daughter.

In a three-page document filed at the central office Monday, Vila expressed doubts about the process PSS used to determine its findings in the complaint he filed in October 2009.

PSS, in its November letter to Vila, ruled that it has fulfilled its duty of providing services for the student's special needs. It also said the child did not avail of some sessions offered by the school. This decision was based on the log sheets and monthly reports of PSS.

But Villa remains doubtful.

"Without the benefit of seeing the log sheets and the reports myself, I would still have doubts and apprehensions about my daughter properly and adequately receiving the appropriate standard of care and attention," Vila told Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan in his letter.

Even with the log sheets and reports purportedly showing completion of the number of hours of treatment for his daughter as required in the Individualized Education Plan, Vila said he is still skeptical about its quality and efficacy, based on the current therapist-child ratio that he believes seriously hampers his daughter's chance of full treatment.

Vila's daughter has pervasive developmental disorder and constantly needs the service of qualified experts in the field.

He said PSS has only one occupational therapist and one speech language pathologist.

"To expect two special education teachers to provide complete and effective services to approximately 700 children with special needs in the CNMI borders on impossibility," Vila said, adding that both the system and the Board of Education need to seriously look at the impact of the situation on the development and progress of children with special needs.

To augment manpower shortages within PSS, Vila recommends tapping the services of qualified off-island experts.

Although Vila admitted that his daughter did not avail of certain occupational therapy and speech language services from October 2008 to May 2009, he also blames the system for not providing other needed service for his child.

"I believe that our failure was not entirely due to our making. As a child with special needs, I believe my daughter is entitled to every component of the services appropriate to her, including free bus service, of which my daughter is a regular recipient," he said.

Vila urged the system to provide a high standard of care and attention required for children with special needs as mandated by specific laws. These include Public Law 16-28, the Commonwealth Autism Commission Act of 2008 and the Education Act of 1988, or Public Law 16-10.

"While these statutes may not be pointedly relevant, they are at least very instructive to the extent that they emphasize the need of providing a high standard of care and attention for children with special needs. I believe that everybody should be guided by the same standard in caring and attending to children with special needs, like my beloved daughter," Vila added.

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370, SAIPAN, MP 96950

Head Start Policy Council
Agenda

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Head Start Policy Council hereby gives notice that it will have a meeting on January 13, 2010 (Wednesday) from 10:30am-2:30pm, Napu Conference Room, Pacific Islands Club, San Antonio, Saipan.

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Quorum
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Adoption of December 7, 2009 Minutes

II. Public Comments

III. Communications
1. From the State Board of Education
2. From the Office of Head Start
3. Danya International

IV. Monthly Reports
1. Director
2. Managers
3. Finance
4. Council Standing Committees
   a. Personnel
   b. Education
   c. Executive
   d. Finance
   e. Public Relations

V. Old Business
1. Tabled Items
   a. Approval to Revise Policy 8050
   b. Approval of Ongoing Monitoring Policy

VI. New Business
1. Approvals:
   a. Use of Parent Activity Funds
   b. SY 2009-2010 Self Assessment Report
   c. SY 2009-2010 Community Assessment Plans

VII. Executive Session

VIII. Next Meeting

IX. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. Public Comments are limited to 15 minutes; therefore comments are limited to 3 minutes each.

This meeting is open to the public, interested individuals are welcome to attend. Any person(s) requiring special accommodations may contact Ms. Candace Q. Celis at 664-3761.

/s/ Mr. Gene Weaver
Chairperson

1,000 people homeless on Solomons after tsunami

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (AP)—Landslides and a tsunami destroyed the homes of about one-third of the population on one of the islands in the Solomons, but lives were likely spared as residents with memories of previous disasters fled quickly to higher ground, officials said.

From the air, extensive damage could be seen on a remote western island after a 7.2-magnitude temblor triggered the landslides in the Pacific Solomon Islands on Monday, said disaster management office director Loti Yates.

Officials said Tuesday that no injuries were reported some 30 hours after the biggest in a series of quakes churned a tsunami wave that was up to 10 feet (3 meters) high as it plowed into the coast.

However, more than 1,000 people have been affected after some 200 houses were destroyed on Rendova, an island some 190 miles (300 kilometers) from the capital Honiara. Only 3,600 people live on Rendova.

Photographs taken from police helicopters Tuesday showed debris lining the foreshore and damaged houses on the coasts of Rendova and Tetepare, as well as deep scars on hills and cliffs caused by landslides.

Yates said some 200 households were taking shelter in emergency centers on Rendova.

Hillsides crashed down and the tsunami inundated homes Monday, but residents' memories of earlier disasters probably helped prevent any casualties, officials and residents said.

In April 2007, an 8.1 temblor unleashed a tsunami that killed more than 50 people. A quake-churned tsunami that killed more than 200 on nearby Samoa and Tonga in September was another reminder, locals said.

AP

In this image provided by the Solomon Island's Police, a landslide on a side of a hill is seen on the island of Rendova, Solomon Islands, Monday, Jan. 4, 2010, following an earthquake.

"People are very sensitive, as a quake conjures up memories, and people immediately begin going to higher ground," police commissioner Peter Marshall told The Associated Press.

"The fact it was daylight, the isolated nature of the wave and that the landslides were in a relatively sparsely populated area" also helped, he said.

The largest quake—magnitude 7.2—happened about 9:30 a.m. local time Monday and caused the tsunami to hit the coast a short time later.

Since then, at least a dozen other quakes greater than magnitude 5.0 have rocked the earthquake-prone region. The strongest, a magnitude 6.9 aftershock, hit the nation's western region again late Tuesday night, but there were no immediate reports of fresh damage and no reports of injury.

In the provincial capital Gizo, dive shop owner Danny Kennedy said the general rule is that "if there's anything more than 20 seconds of shaking or any sea water recedes, head for the hills."

A police boat patrolled Tuesday to check the coastline, where many homes are at sea level, making them vulnerable to tsunamis, National Disaster Management Office spokesman Julian Makaa said. No casualties had been reported so far, he said.

One village, Retavo, home to about 20 people, was reportedly completely inundated by a wall of sea water up to 10 feet (3 meters) high, but Makaa said no deaths or injuries had been reported there.

Emergency food, water and tarpaulins were being shipped in.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-10-012

The Office of the Executive Director! Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, is soliciting sealed bids for the construction of **SAIPAN WELL ISOLATION PROJECT**, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A non-refundable payment of **$350.00** is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after **January 11, 2010** at the Water Division Office, CUC, Saipan. A pre-bid Conference for this project is scheduled at **9:00 a.m.**, on **January 15, 2010**, at the CUC Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit is scheduled following the pre-bid meeting.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-10-012 Construction of Saipan Well Isolation Project"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan Commercial Building P.O . Box 501220, Saipan! MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM local time (CST), Wednesday, January 27, 2010**, at which time they will be publicly open and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury. A performance and payment bond of hundred (100%) percent each of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety companies must hold a certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety for proposal security. The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a U.S. Treasury listed company. No advance payment will be authorized on the project or an Irrevocable Letter of Credit (100% aggregate contract cost/CUC Beneficiary) or a payment bond. All insurers questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI1s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). A Clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI1s Insurance Code.

The bidder is required to submit a copy of his CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less that the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page - http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws including the **Davis Bacon Act.**

This project is funded though a grant from the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** under the **AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA)**. Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval from the USEPA.

This project involves the installation of transmission lines to connect direct feed wells from the different villages into water tank storages to meet all federal safe water standards and requirements.

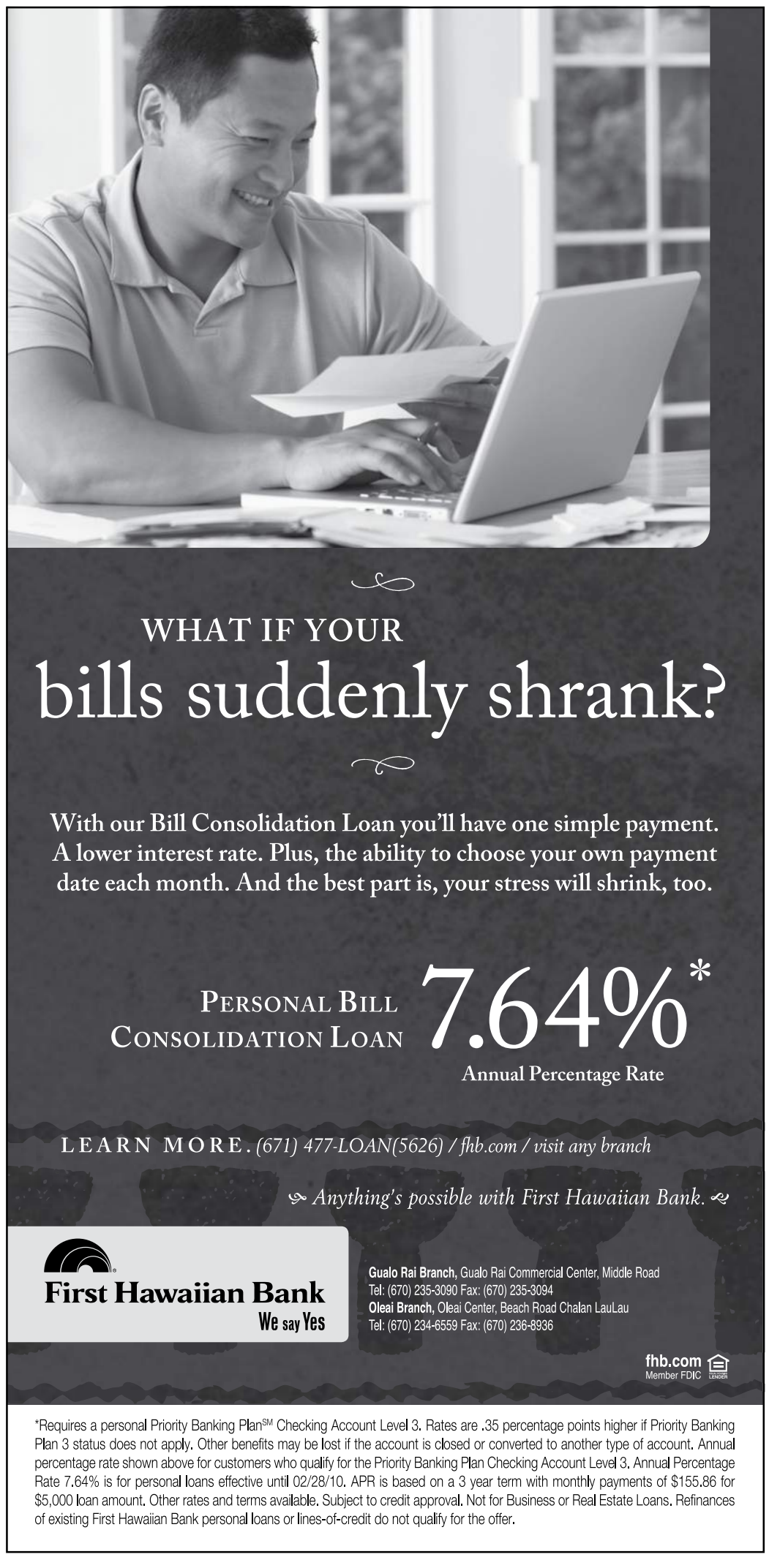
The proposed project will also include the construction of new transmission lines to connect 3 new wells in the Kagman area. For Kagman well field, the work will include control panel enclosure buildings, controls, perimeter security fencing, exterior perimeter slabs, installation of pumps, construction of properly designed wellheads and connecting the wells in to the existing transmission line.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government.

All technical inquiries should be directed to Capt. Robert Lorenz at telephone number (670) 235-7025 Ext. 148 or Mr. Larry T. Manacop at telephone number (670) 235-7025 Ext. 150 and inquiries regarding procurement should be directed to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Procurement & Supply Manager at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 134.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Assistant Executive Director for Operation

/s/ ANTONIO S. MUNA
Executive Director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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation for Bid
PSS IFB 09-040

"Video and Related Equipment for Marianas High School (MHS)"

The Public School System and the State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the purchase of **Video and Related Equipment for Marianas High School.** The Scope of Work is available beginning December 31, 2009 at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund building, Capital Hill, Saipan MP 96950

Bids must be placed in a sealed envelope marked **"IFB 09-040"** containing one (1) original with Three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd Floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **January 20, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.,** at which time bids, will be publicly opened. Any bids received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted.

Questions shall be in writing addressed to Robert Florian, Procurement & Supply Officer or Emailed to the following address: **robert.florian@pss.cnmi.mp**

/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Robert Florian
Procurement Officer

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation for Bid
PSS IFB 09-041

JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR MHS GYMNASIUM

The Public School System and the State Board of Education are soliciting Competitive Sealed Bids for **One Year (Annual) of Janitorial Services for the Marinas High School Gymnasium.**

The Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund Building, Capital Hill, Saipan MP 96950. Faxed requests maybe sent to 664-3791. This is a re-announcement of IFB 09-034.

Bids should be placed in a sealed envelope marked **"IFB 09-041"** containing one (1) original with three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement & Supply Office no later than **January 14, 2010, at 10:00 a.m.,** at which time, bids will be publicly opened. Any bids received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Questions should be in writing and addressed to Robert Florian, Procurement & Supply Officer or E-mailed to the following address: **robert.florian@pss.cnmi.mp**

/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Robert Florian
Procurement Officer

Registration continues for Kluge's book discussion

The NMI Council for the Humanities is continuing to register participants for its upcoming book discussion program that will start on Jan. 19.

The four-week program, facilitated by Dr. P.F. Kluge, will examine four classic American novels: *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *The Things They Carried*.

Participants will explore one novel each week during three discussion sessions to be held at the Visitors Center Theater at the American Memorial Park.

Novels will be examined on three levels—what they say, how they say it, and how their themes relate to contemporary life in the Commonwealth. Ample time will be reserved during each session for class discussion and debate.

The program, supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, is free of charge. Books will be provided by the Council.

Individuals wishing to participate in this program are invited to contact Council staff at 235-4785 to reserve a seat. Space is limited and participants will be registered on a first come, first served basis.

A schedule listing program dates and times is available on the Council's website at www.nmihumanities.org. Contact council staff at 235-4785 for additional information. ***(PR)***

Red flag up at Tinian beach

The Division of Environment Quality has raised the red flag on Kammer Beach on Tinian and is advising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of this site for the next 48 hours.

DEQ said that samples collected from the site contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water. However, studies have shown that storm water runoff in tropical environment, which may not be directly associated with public health concerns.

DEQ welcomes all inquiries as to the quality of the beach water. The public is encouraged to contact DEQ at 664-8500 with any questions. ***(PR)***

Flashback
A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 7, 1999

PSS opens LMA facility
"All of us are blessed today," Commissioner of Education Rita H. Inos told the group who witnessed the blessing of the Lina'la-Malawash Academy held yesterday. The realization of LMA which is scheduled to open next month is indeed a blessing in the midst of a financial crisis. While the Public School System was busy looking for additional funding to keep its schools open, a government house no. 1257 on Capital Hill was repainted and repaired to house LMA. By February, some 25 high school students from Hopwood and Marianas High School are to be admitted in this academy for a second chance of a better future.

Homestead lot inappropriately granted: OPA
The Public Auditor yesterday reported that 1.08 hectares of agricultural homestead lot was inappropriately granted to a homesteader because a hearing committee failed to hear the case in accordance with the homestead laws and regulations. The audit showed that the Division of Public Lands, through another Homestead Review Committee, reviewed and rendered a decision on an agricultural homestead case which was already decided and closed seven years earlier by the first Homestead Review Committee of the former Marianas Public Land Corporation (MPLC). Its decision reversed the first Homestead Committee's decision in favor of the homesteaders. DPL acted beyond its jurisdiction, as a result, DPL's Homestead Review Committee violated the HWA regulations.

Jan. 7, 2000

SNILD okays issuance of resident IDs by mayors
On their final session, Saipan lawmakers yesterday approved a proposal allowing residents of Saipan and the Northern Islands to obtain identification cards from their respective mayor's office upon payment of a fee ranging from $7 to $15. The measure, offered by Rep. Melvin O. Faisao, will provide island residents an official document, if no other valid IDs are available like driver's license, that can be used for any legal transactions. Saipan Mayor Jose C. Sablan and the Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council had both endorsed the proposal since it will benefit the community in terms of identifying residents and citizens.

Coalition adopts Caucus Resolution
The bipartisan coalition comprised of members from all three parties has adopted a Caucus Resolution reaffirming their commitment to work "with shared vision of leadership and policy" beginning on the first day of the 12th NMI Legislature. Adopted on Dec. 30, 1999, the resolution says that the group believes that the new House leadership, reflected in the officers and heads of committees, "is the best that the legislature has to offer and will lead us in the new millennium and new time of prosperity for everyone who lives and works here." "We desire to publicly acknowledge our support for the new leadership and express our confidence that the officers of the House stated herein are truly the right people for the job and will lead the House with dignity, honor and zeal," according to the resolution.

Jan. 7, 2002

Film industry eyed to revive local economy
Citing the strategic location of the Northern Marianas as an advantage to international film makers, local film industry players geared up to reestablish structural policies that would revive the CNMI Film Office. The Marianas International Film Association, a potential movie industry organization for the CNMI, met Friday to discuss the potentials of reviving the Northern Marianas as a preferred film-shooting destination in the Pacific. Small Business Development Center Director Eric Plinske told MIFA members that, by reviving the CNMI Film Office, the Commonwealth has a great advantage over Hawaii and Guam in terms of immigration and federal wage policies.

Fund mulls reshuffling investments
The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund is currently considering reshuffling the composition of its overseas investments to conform with the strategic guidelines it came up with its investment consultants. In a bid to further improve the growth trends of the Fund's international portfolio, Fund legal counsel Kathleen S. Troy-Rucker said the Fund's Board of Trustees and its money managers have been discussing doing a bit of restructuring with the portfolio. "We've been discussing this for a couple of months now. Particularly since the international market is doing better, we have been discussing moving more money into international equities," Troy-Rucker said.

Joeten's Best Buys of the Week!

January 7 to January 13, 2010

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$13.99

3 Way Training Set
$12.99

Gym Yoga Set
$32.99

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XX, Issue No. 5

Published daily at 2/F JP Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Architecture to look up to

McClatchy-Tribune News Service

The Burj Dubai, or as it was renamed during its opening Monday, the Burj Khalifa, has been likened to the Tower of Babel, or in the words of *Los Angeles Times* architecture critic Christopher Hawthorne, "a tombstone for some ruined ideas." That's because the structure that has shattered the record for world's tallest building had the misfortune to be completed in the midst of a global recession, after Dubai's real estate market had all but collapsed.

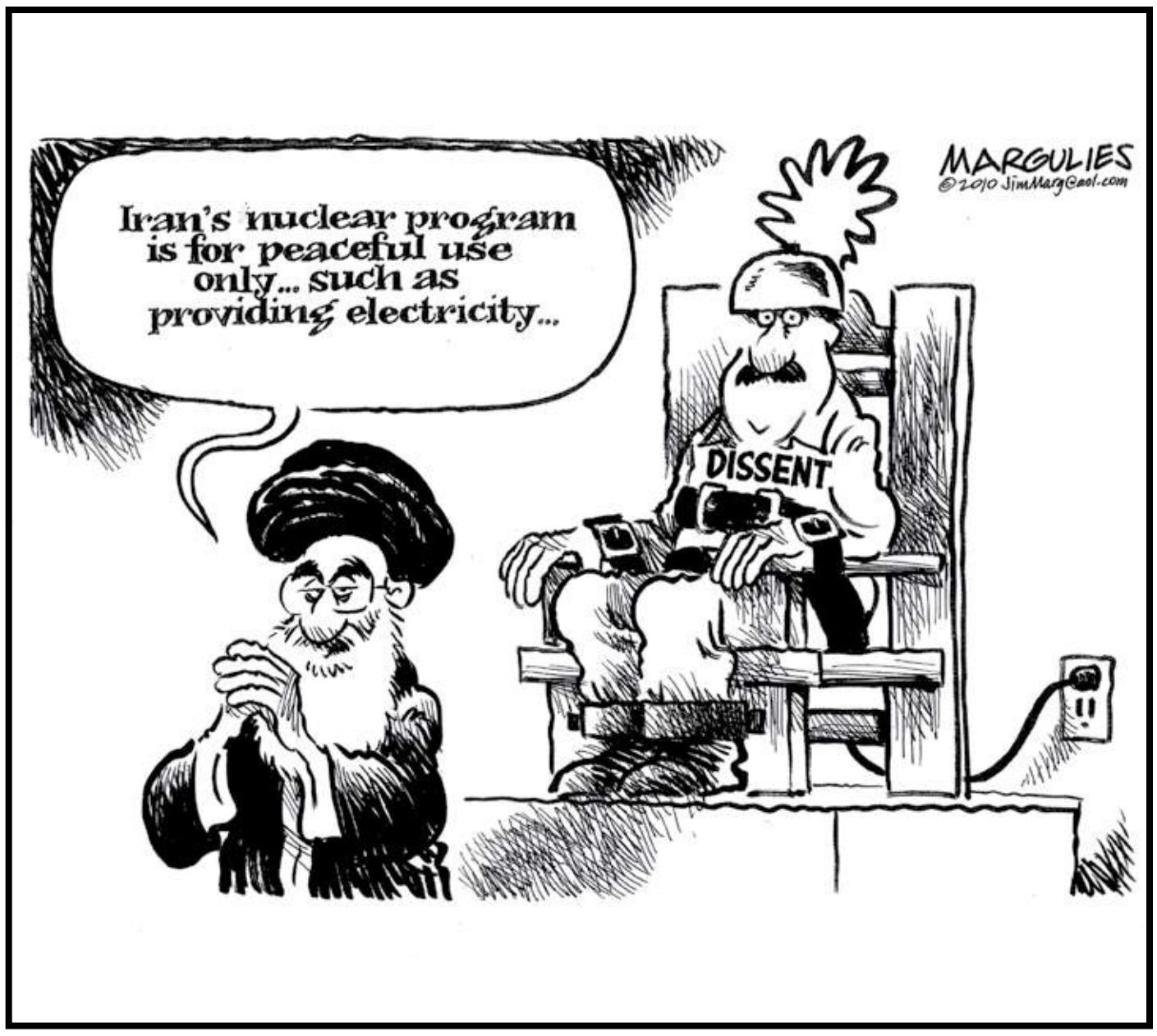
The tower may well be, as the headline on Hawthorne's critique called it, a "temple to hubris." It may also be the latest entry in a contest Sigmund Freud would have found worthy of a treatise—the compulsion to boast the world's biggest urban erection. Yet if its corkscrew shape and outsized ambitions have raised comparisons to Babel, it reminds us more of another skyscraper that appeared under disastrous economic conditions but whose value was always more symbolic than economical: the Empire State Building.

When it opened in 1931 in the midst of the Depression, the erstwhile world titleholder for height was derided as the "Empty State Building" because hardly any tenants could be found to occupy it. No matter; the Art Deco masterpiece was a spectacular accomplishment for its time, a statement about the optimism of its builders, the might of its city and the pride of its nation. No tower could touch it for 40 years, until New York and Chicago started a spire-measuring contest by raising the World Trade Center and Sears Tower (now Willis Tower).

American cities have stopped playing this game because few investors want to take on the enormous risks involved; moreover, the United States is probably feeling potent enough that it no longer needs to overcompensate with such grand symbolic gestures. Yet the world's emerging economic powerhouses still have tower envy. Hence seven of the 10 tallest buildings in the world can now be found in Asia, and the newest address in the brash city-state of Dubai tops out at 2,717 feet—about as tall as both towers of the World Trade Center stacked on top of each other.

The state-owned developer that built the Burj Khalifa may never make back its whopping $1.5 billion investment, but Dubai has certainly made a statement. And you can call it hubris, but we're in awe of the architectural and engineering achievement it represents.

(c) 2010, Los Angeles Times



'I am for sale'

By MASHA HAMILTON
Los Angeles Times

Masha Hamilton has written four novels, most recently 31 Hours*, and is founder of the Afghan Women's Writing Project and the Camel Book Drive. She wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

American thinking about Afghanistan these days is largely focused on figures: troop numbers, casualty tolls, war chests, withdrawal dates. It can be difficult to see individual Afghans standing in the shadows. This is the story of one of them, a woman whose narrative is both uniquely her own, and emblematic.

She's a wonderful writer, and she should be telling her own story. But she cannot risk it.

I came to know her through the Afghan Women's Writing Project, which I founded last year. Working in three secure online classrooms, the project pairs Afghan women with American women novelists, poets, memoirists, screenwriters and journalists. Through writing assignments and a revision process, the women tell their stories, which then go on a blog using first names only for security reasons. Sometimes, even that much identification is too precarious. This is one of those cases.

The young woman I'm writing about is determined, passionate and full of dreams. Unlike most young women in Afghanistan, she had a rare early advantage: a father who encouraged her to achieve academically, even during the years when the Taliban barred her from attending school. Here's how she described her early life in an essay she wrote as part of the writing project:

"During the Taliban's black government ... my father bought me school supplies, and told me: 'Be patient. One day you will finish your studies.' He was right. I waited five years, but after that, I could go to school. ... When I was 16 years old, one of my neighbors came to our house and proposed that his son marry me. My father was angry and told him: 'Do you know my daughter is 16? It is time for her to study. If the king comes and knocks at the door of my house and proposes that my daughter marry his son, I won't accept it. Please, leave my house and never come back again.'"

But then, as she was finishing high school, her father died. "When I lost him, I lost my shadow," she wrote. In keeping with Afghan cultural practices, her three Taliban-influenced brothers became responsible for her. For several years, in exchange for her turning over much of her salary, they allowed her to continue her education and be employed outside the house.

But now they've decided—over her strong objections—to marry her off to a first cousin, a man of about 40. This situation is not uncommon. According to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, up to 80 percent of all women in the country face forced marriages. In February, she is to be engaged in return for a $20,000 dowry that will go to her brothers. "This money," she writes, "might possibly keep my family alive."

Yet for her, the marriage will mean the opposite of life: an end to her studies, her work outside the home, her connections to non-Afghans. Her uncle's family lives in a conservative, Taliban-held province. Women there "are required to wear burkas and are responsible for cooking, cleaning and caring for the animals," she wrote in her essay. "Most have eight or nine children. They can't go outside the house."

Even as her brothers make their plans, she is seeking a way to oppose them. But as an Afghan woman, her options are limited.

"I told my mom: 'Please give me a chance. I don't like this man. I can't marry him. If you want to sell me, then I am ready to buy myself. I have a plan for my life. Please give me a chance, please, please.' She didn't reply, but cried silently with me. ... Running away is not an option, because girls who run away here are raped by men and spend years in jail, and I am not such a girl. I can't leave my mom because my brothers believe anything 'wrong' I do is the fault of my mother, and they will kill her. ... I am like a piece of cloth. I cost little. Who will buy me?"

If she can't avoid the marriage, she says, "I won't stay in this world." The threat is not simply dramatic: In recent years, suicide has become increasingly common among Afghan women trapped in unions they opposed, a disturbing trend noted by the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Human Rights Watch and others.

There is risk involved in sharing this story here, even though I have withheld the woman's name and location. But she allowed me to do so because there is also danger in not sharing it. If we don't ask these women to speak, and then listen to their stories, we are gagging them as surely as the Taliban did. And when we stop sharing these stories with each other, our understanding of what we are doing in Afghanistan, and why, will necessarily become more narrow.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Tribute to a brave adventurer

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

Jim Bell stands atop Mt. Tapochao, the highest point on Saipan. RIK VILLEGAS

To look at Jim Bell, you would never know that he accomplished things that no other person has ever done or may ever attempt to do in our lifetime. His slight built and calm demeanor belied his nerves of steel and unstoppable spirit.

We first met Jim a few days before he turned 70, and would cross the Tinian channel again after 27 years. He became a close friend of the family over the next several months. His next big "adventure," as he liked to call them, was to swim the 80 miles between Papua New Guinea and Australia, and rest on the islands between the landmasses. If he survived the sea crocodiles, white sharks and poisonous jellyfish, he would still have to contend with unfriendly natives.

He felt that he could best prepare for the adventure by swimming the shoreline of Saipan in four to six mile segments. This would give him a "safe" way to build up his endurance and get a natural tan to protect himself from the scorching sun. Never mind the fact that no one had ever tried to accomplish this feat. For Jim it was just a training exercise.

He started his warm-up adventure on July 4, 2008, and completed his last leg on Sept. 20. Even though Jim did not check the currents or tides, he meticulously planned his swim prior to entering the water. He had a large map of Saipan that he used to track the various segments he completed. Jim wrote that he swam a total of 73 miles around the 46.3-mile shoreline of Saipan. The reason his total miles swam was more than the distance of the shoreline was because it included swimming in the lagoon to the point outside the reef where he would continue each leg. It took him a total of 87 hours and 24 minutes. He recorded seeing 15 reef sharks, 12 turtles, five stingrays, and five crown of thorns starfish.

Since he had swam completely around Guam, while serving in the Navy 28 years ago, he set a goal to wrap up his adventure by swimming around Tinian and Rota. So on Oct. 4, 2008, he decided to swim a third time across the channel by starting on Saipan. Little did we realize that it would be 26 hours after we watched him cross the reef at Obyan beach before he would stand on the shore of Tinian. He made this commentary about his adventure that gives some insight into his thoughts: "Why was I back for another crossing when two crossings would have sufficed? When I was swimming the south coast of Saipan in the last stages of my swim around Saipan, I was swimming along the north side of the channel and began to feel a need to get back into deep water swimming. There is a sense of solitude when you are far from shore alone.

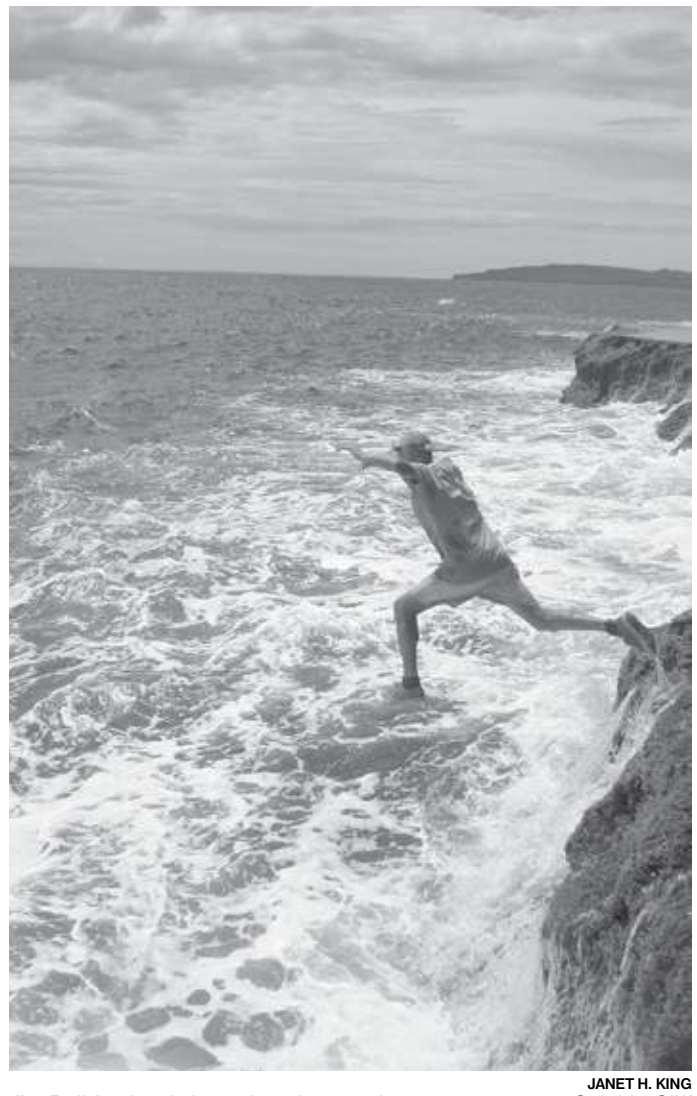
"Why else do I swim alone? I would not find out what reserves of energy I have if I had a boat to take me home. I would not have to figure my way out of every situation and would not be forced to consider all possible ways of dealing with different conditions if I had an escort.

"What did I find out about myself on this crossing? When I swam the channel at the age of 43, at the end of 12 hours, I felt like I could have swum all night. At the age of 70 I got to find out that I do have those reserves of energy and more. What is my limit? I did not find that out. I feel certain I could have gone to 30 hours and probably past that. I found out that practically all of my experiences in the sea can still be accessed even 40 years later. That allowed me to approach a night in the channel without anxiety."

Unfortunately, our friend Jim Bell did have a chance to test his limits when he jumped into the ocean in his attempt to complete his swim around Tinian. James H. Bell was last seen Oct. 17, 2009. The photo taken by Janet King shows him fearlessly leaping into the treacherous waters near Suicide Cliff. Jim approached swimming as he approached life—fully leaping into it and not turning back. We will miss the Old Man in the sea and his passion for living life to its fullest.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Friends see Jim Bell off as he goes again on one of his adventures.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Bell is met by friends after a long swim.



JANET H. KING
Jim Bell fearlessly leaps into the treacherous waters near Suicide Cliff on Tinian in this picture taken of him on Oct. 17, 2009. That was the last time anyone saw Bell.

Letters to the Editor

NMC fiasco

It is very disturbing that NMC is drowning in its own fiasco of poor leadership and mismanagement. There are factions within the faculty leadership and within the Board itself, as revealed in the local papers. Obviously, there is a power struggle because of the lack of objective leadership at the management level and the Board as well.

Everybody is pointing at Fernandez as the culprit, but it's clear that there is a "clique" that pulls the string to which the president reacts. So who is really and arbitrarily running the show at NMC? Even if Fernandez is replaced, as long as the "clique" remains intact, it's disastrous.

The regents have their work cut out for them to fine-tune the policies and procedures for rehiring, firing and grievance to ensure transparency, fairness and objectivity. They need to resolve these quickly to protect the credibility of NMC and the rights and interests of our students.

Jose B. Aldan
As Lito, Saipan

Pay for hours worked

I would like to bring to light a situation occurring in our Public School System that is adversely affecting employee morale.

I am a bus driver for special education students. I show up to work and work hard to support my family. I feel like I have been mistreated by PSS and my children are suffering as a result.

On several occasions this year, my supervisors have altered my time card because they say I did not clock out for lunch. This is unfair because the demands of a special education bus driver require me to work these lunch hours. On many occasions I have had to go hungry because of work demands. To cut my paycheck is unfair. I deserve to be paid for hours worked.

The regulations for the Public School Employment of Non-Certified Personnel handbook in 2403 even state that "hours may be changed in order to meet job demands."

I have no problem meeting the demands of my job. I am flexible and willing to work long hours, but I deserve to be paid for those hours worked. I believe that I am not the only person to have their paycheck cut and I request that a formal investigation take place to look into this issue.

Norman C. Villagomez
Kagman, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly sunny and breezy with scattered showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

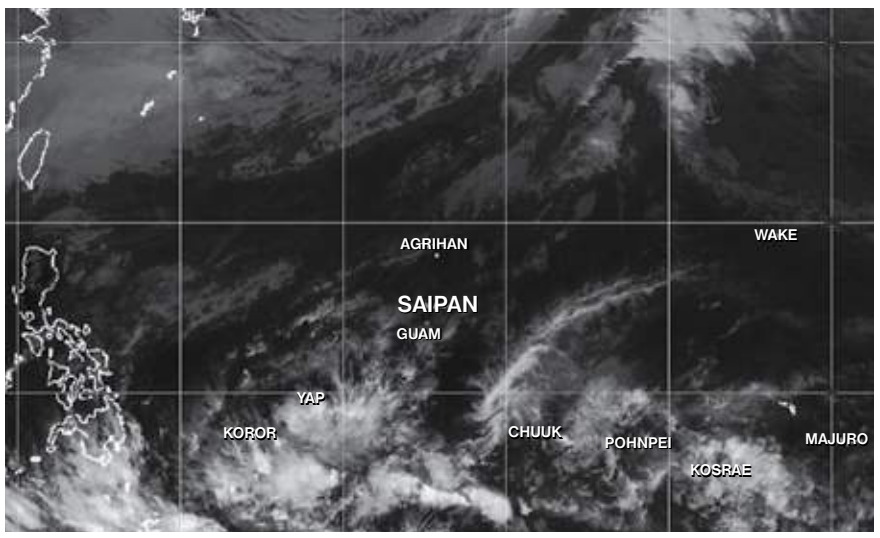
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲83	▼74
Palau	Showers	▲85	▼77
Yap	Rain	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲89	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼77
Kosrae	Rain	▲83	▼79
Majuro	Partly Sunny	▲84	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲71	▼60
Beijing	Cold	▲19	▼17
Hong Kong	Showers	▲61	▼56
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲79	▼68
London	Flurries	▲34	▼28
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲70	▼50
Manila	Dreary	▲84	▼72
Melbourne	Sunny	▲79	▼55
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼51
New York	Partly Sunny	▲36	▼25
Osaka	Rain/Snow	▲44	▼32
Paris	Flurries	▲29	▼25
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲40	▼25
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼53
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲47	▼38
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲58	▼48
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲31	▼14
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲45	▼33
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲35	▼26

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2010

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak cold front enters the discussion area near 25N153E and extends to 19N145E then continues as a shear line to 17N140E then exits the discussion area near 14N130E.Clouds and patchy rain are found along and up to 200 miles north of the boundary. A near-equatorial trough stretches northeastward from EQ130E to 3N138E to a weak circulation near 2N143E then continues to a second circulation near 2N162E. Convergent winds north of the trough are producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across the Republic of Palau and portions of Chuuk and Yap states within 150 miles north and south of a line that stretches from 2N130E to 7N140E to 2N152E and also between the equator and 3N from 136E to 144E. A surface trough near Pohnpei extends from 8N159E to 6N159E. Trade-wind convergence along and east of the trough is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across Pohnpei and Kosrae states within 150 miles north and south of a line that stretches from 9N155E to 3N170E. A cold front enters the discussion area near 20N180 to 20N165E to 23N161E to exit the discussion area near 25N156E. Clouds and showers are located along and up to 150 miles of the boundary. A shear line remnant extends from near 20N155E through the Marianas near Rota and continues to 10N135E. Patchy clouds and showers are found along and up to 100 miles north of the boundary.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:12 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
6:24 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
12:51 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
7:56 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:02 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:03 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:04 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today		11:35 PM
Friday	12:26 AM	12:17 PM
Saturday	1:20 AM	1:01 PM
Sunday	2:15 AM	1:47 PM
Monday	3:10 AM	2:36 PM

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  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
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  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
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  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
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- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 22, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA	6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/703	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 5 via PUS
C09603/933	3:15pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:20am+1	Daily via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA	8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	4, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business

A.M. Best affirms ratings of Century Insurance

OLDWICK, N.J. (Business Wire)—A.M. Best Co. has affirmed the financial strength rating of B+ (Good) and issuer credit rating of "bbb-" of Century Insurance Co., Ltd. (CIC Saipan) (Northern Mariana Islands). The outlook for both ratings is stable.

The ratings reflect CIC Saipan's improvement in underwriting profitability and conservative investment approach. The ratings also recognize the company's solid presence in Saipan through partnering with two key distributors.

Underpinned by its immediate holding entity, Tan Holdings Corporation, CIC Saipan continues to be one of the largest general insurers in Saipan. Regardless of the further premium shrinkage as a result of the unfavorable economic environment due to the significant reduction in garment exports and a decline in tourism revenues, the company achieved an underwriting profit of USD 0.6 million in 2008. The improvement in the combined ratio from 120.8 percent in 2007 to 96.1 percent in 2008 is mainly attributed to the termination of unfavorable motor business from brokers.

With all invested assets allocated in cash and cash equivalent, the company maintains strong liquidity to support the short-tailed nature of its insurance liabilities. Nonetheless, the prevailing low interest environment might undermine the investment yield of its assets in the short term.

Offsetting factors include reduction in paid-up capital, concentration risk associated with reliance on a single distribution channel and high insurance receivables. The ratings also consider the continued shrinkage in business volume and the volatile underwriting result.

In view of the continued premium contraction, CIC Saipan decided to repatriate $2 million back to Tan Holdings Corporation in the form of a reduction in paid-up capital in 2009. Prospectively, a smaller capital base, however, could magnify the volatility of the company's Best's Capital Adequacy Ratio (BCAR), which measures capitalization on a risk-adjusted basis. The company's overall risk profile diminished due to the decline in business volume and the transfer of ownership back to Tan Holdings in 2008 of the operating subsidiaries, Century Insurance Company of Guam and Century Insurance PNG, Ltd.

Google, Apple spar in high-tech heavyweight battle

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. (AP)—The once-cuddly relationship between Google Inc. and Apple Inc. is morphing into a prickly power struggle as the ambitions and ideas of the technology trendsetters increasingly collide.

The growing use of high-powered phones for Web surfing has become a flash point in the brewing battle because both Google and Apple view the mobile market as a key to their continued success in the next decade.

The rivalry also in spilling into other products, including Web browsers, computer operating systems and digital music.

The tensions rose further Tuesday when Google unveiled its plans to sell its own cell phone in its latest bid to upstage Apple's hottest gadget, the iPhone.

Google is billing its phone, called the Nexus One, as a "super" phone—a device designed for people looking for something more advanced than the iPhone, Research in Motion Ltd.'s BlackBerry and other devices that serve as pocket-sized computers.

The Nexus One "is the closest thing to an iPhone challenger that I have seen so far," said Gartner Inc. analyst Ken Dulaney. "It's a very good piece of hardware."

Meanwhile, Apple is taking a stab at Google's heart by expanding into advertising sales. Apple let it be known that it had bought a mobile advertising service, Quattro Wireless, just before Google held a news conference at its Mountain View headquarters to announce the Nexus One.

Quattro gives Apple its own platform for distributing ads on the iPhone, and conceivably could serve as a marketing vehicle for a computing tablet that Apple is expected to be introduced near the end of the month. The acquisition also serves as a counterpunch to Google's proposed $750 million acquisition of Quattro rival AdMob, a deal that may be tied up in a regulatory review for several more months.

Apple didn't disclose Quattro's sales price, but the technology blog All Things Digital pegged it at $275 million.

Google hopes AdMob can help it become as dominant selling ads for mobile phones as it has been in placing ads on Internet-connected computer screens during the past six years. Most of Google's ads are tied to search requests on personal computers, a system that has propelled Google's annual revenue from $1.5 billion in 2003 to more than $22 billion in 2009.

Meanwhile, the iPhone has turned into a gold mine for Apple, with more than 30 million of the handsets sold in the past 2-1/2 years and demand still growing. It has helped boost Apple's annual revenue from $24 billion in its fiscal year 2007 to $36.5 billion in its most recent year ending last Sept. 26.

The iPhone's success also has spawned the development of more than 100,000 applications that make it easier to play games, read news, check the weather, get directions and shop on the handset.

Google acknowledges it also has benefited from the additional traffic that the iPhone has brought to its search engine and other services.

A super phone
Google unveiled its Nexus One, the newest smart phone on the market.
2.4 in. (60 mm)
4.7 in. (119 mm)
3.7 in. (94 mm)
Camera
• 5 megapixels, autofocus, LED flash
• Video at 20 frames per second
Soft keys
Back, Home, Menu, Search
Trackball
Back view
The goods
• Runs on Android 2.1
• Touchscreen navigation; screen landscape and portrait
• $179 with two-year contract with T-Mobile; $529 with no plan
• 512MB Flash capacity, with 4GB card; can be expanded to 32GB
• Power and battery
On 3G network, in hours
Talk time 7
Standby 250
Internet use 6.5
Video playback 7
Audio playback 20
Source: Google
Graphic: Melina Yingling
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Forbes names BOH as top performing bank

HONOLULU, Hawaii—*Forbes Magazine* has named Bank of Hawaii the nation's top performing bank among the 100 largest banks and thrifts. (The rankings were published in its Dec. 30, 2009 online edition and will be included in the Jan. 18, 2010 print issue.)

"This recognition reflects positively on our bank, our community, and our employees. Although we do not seek recognition, our employees and those we serve should take pride in the Bank of Hawaii financial performance, especially during a difficult economic environment," said Al Landon, Bank of Hawaii chairman and chief executive officer.

To determine the ranking, Forbes partnered with SNL Financial and evaluated U.S. owned banks and thrift institutions ranging in asset size from $5.2 billion (Harlyesville National Bank) to $2.3 trillion (Bank of America). Bank of Hawaii has assets of $12.2 billion.

The ranking was based on eight different financial performance measures, which included: return on average equity, net interest margin, non-performing loans as a percentage of loans, non-performing assets as percentage of assets, reserves as a percentage of non-performing loans, two capital ratios (Tier 1 and risk-based) and leverage ratio. ***(PR)***

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Amazon unveils global version of Kindle DX

SEATTLE (AP)—Amazon.com Inc. will start selling an international version of its larger-screen e-reader, Kindle DX, in an effort to snag more sales around the world. The company already offers an international version of the Kindle. The online retailer said Wednesday that customers in over 100 countries can pre-order the latest version of the $489 Kindle DX, which has a 9.7-inch screen and will wirelessly download books in many places around the globe. The latest Kindle DX will begin shipping on Jan. 19 to countries including Italy, Japan and Spain. In October, Amazon introduced an international version of the Kindle, which has a 6-inch screen. Amazon said it has shipped to more than 130 countries so far.

Mixed economic data, higher dollar press stocks

NEW YORK (AP)—Investors turned cautious on the second trading day of the year as a pair of economic reports gave mixed signals about how the recovery was going. Major stock indexes ended little changed a day after the Dow Jones industrials soared more than 150 points on upbeat manufacturing reports in the U.S. and China. Uncertainty over key reports this week on employment and the service industry also kept buyers at bay. The economic news on Tuesday was muddled. The Commerce Department reported that factory orders rose by more than twice what had been expected in November, reflecting demand in the steel, computer and chemical industries. The gain of 1.1 percent easily beat the 0.5 percent forecast of analysts polled Thomson Reuters.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA	4,947.20 Up 7.70 (0.16%)
HONG KONG	22,465.75 Up 186.17 (0.84%)
JAKARTA	2,599.35 Down 5.93 (-0.23%)
TOKYO	10,731.45 Up 49.62 (0.46%)
K. LUMPUR	1,290.99 Up 2.75 (0.21%)
MANILA	3,039.93 Up 11.47 (0.38%)
SINGAPORE	2,930.85 Up 10.578 (0.36%)
SEOUL	1,705.32 Up 14.70 (0.87%)
BANGKOK	734.09 Up 1.98 (0.27%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	10,572.02 -11.94
NASDAQ	2,308.71 0.29
S&P	1,136.52 0.00

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.0936
British Pound	0.6258
Canadian Dollar	1.0377
Chinese Renminbi	6.8283
Euro	0.6966
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7567
Indian Rupee	46.1150
Indonesian Rupiah	9,288.7500
Japanese Yen	92.0000
Malaysian Ringgit	3.3865
New Zealand Dollar	1.3618
Philippine Peso	45.9600
Singapore Dollar	1.3963
South Korean Won	1,136.4000
Swiss Franc	1.0344
Taiwan Dollar	31.8300
Thailand Baht	33.1550

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

Grim Obama says terror attack 'dots' not connected

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama scolded 20 of his highest-level officials on Tuesday over the botched Christmas Day terror attack on an airliner bound for Detroit, taking them jointly to task for "a screw-up that could have been disastrous" and should have been avoided.

After that 90-minute private reckoning around a table in the super-secure White House Situation Room, a grim-faced Obama informed Americans that the government had enough information to thwart the attack ahead of time but that the intelligence community, though trained to do so, did not "connect those dots."

"That's not acceptable, and I will not tolerate it," he said, standing solo to address the issue publicly for the fifth time—and the first in Washington—since the Dec. 25 incident.

Afterward, the White House released quotes from the Situation Room session. Disclosing Obama's words during a private meeting is normally strictly off-limits for this White House and most others before it. In this case, Obama advisers are eager to portray the president as aggressively on the job—even as he has little, or in this case nothing, new to announce about how to tackle the security lapses that allowed the airline plot to almost succeed.

Obama did not say who, if anyone, in the government might be held accountable. Earlier in the day, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said the president still has full confidence in his three top national security officials: the director of national intelligence, Dennis Blair, CIA Director Leon Panetta and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano—all of whom were among those around the table with Obama later.

For now, administration officials say that Obama believes blame is shared enough that no one agency or official appears clearly enough at fault to be fired. However, as the president and his team continue to identify what the security gaps were and how to fill them, Obama could determine that someone needs to go, said one senior administration official familiar with Obama's thinking. The official spoke anonymously because of the sensitivity of the matter.

AP
President Barack Obama speaks in the Grand Foyer of the White House in Washington, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2010, about plans to thwart future terrorist attacks after an alleged terrorist attempt to destroy a Detroit-bound U.S. airliner on Christmas Day.

Premiums are prime issue for health care negotiators

WASHINGTON (AP)—Congressional Democrats and President Barack Obama began work in earnest Tuesday on difficult issues still standing in the way of their national health care overhaul after months of tortuous debate. Topping the list: How to help Americans pay for insurance premiums.

At a White House meeting that stretched into Tuesday evening, the president and Democratic congressional leaders agreed on fast-track negotiations that would bypass the need for a formal conference to resolve differences between the House and Senate health care bills.

Obama "also stated his intention to work with leaders to strengthen affordability ... beyond what is in the Senate bill," said a House leadership aide, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting was private.

The president met with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md. Joining the discussion by telephone were Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., who were out of town.

House Democratic leaders will head back to the White House on Wednesday afternoon. Staffers from the House and Senate will meet with administration aides this week to formally begin sorting through issues—with the White House taking a lead role in settling disputes.

Republicans aren't invited, and they complained that the Democrats intended to deliberate behind closed doors—though lawmakers often do so in the final stages of such complex legislation. Separately, the head of C-SPAN, the nonpartisan public affairs network, called for letting the sun shine in on the discussions—as Obama once had promised.

House Democrats face the virtual certainty that they will not get the government-run insurance plan liberals had sought, a point Pelosi acknowledged after meeting earlier in the day with key committee leaders.

FBI: Vegas shooter had 'lengthy' criminal history

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A disgruntled Social Security recipient, shot dead after killing a Las Vegas federal building security guard and wounding a U.S. marshal, had a "lengthy" criminal history in Tennessee and California, including a conviction for killing his brother, authorities said Tuesday.

Johnny Lee Wicks, 66, faced murder and drug charges in Memphis, Tenn., in the 1970s, and sex assault-domestic violence charges in Sacramento, Calif., in the late-1980s, said Kevin Favreau, special agent in charge of the Las Vegas FBI office.

"Our investigation strongly indicates that Wicks acted alone, and that his motive was an overwhelming anger against the United States government," Favreau told reporters on the steps of the Lloyd D. George U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building, where Wicks opened fire Monday without saying a word.

Court records show Wicks complained of racial discrimination and lost a federal lawsuit last year challenging a $286 cut in his $974 monthly Social Security benefits after moving from California to Las Vegas.

He was accused of killing his brother, Leo Wicks, in Memphis in 1974. He was sentenced in 1976 to 12-15 years for second-degree murder and paroled in 1981, said Dorinda Carter, spokeswoman for the Tennessee Department of Corrections.

He was accused of assault to commit rape in Sacramento in 1989, the FBI said. He served jail time after pleading no contest to domestic battery in Sacramento in 1995, court records there show.

Wicks also feuded with managers of a downtown apartment building for seniors and people with disabilities in Fresno, where his handwritten protest of his eviction and a small claims court filing in 1998 included an allegation that he was ousted "Because I am Black."

Favreau said Tuesday that investigators don't believe Wicks threatened violence before torching his apartment a few minutes after 5 a.m. Monday, and walking about three miles to the federal courthouse.

Octuplets mother defends accused fertility doctor

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Octuplets mother Nadya Suleman on Tuesday defended the fertility doctor who helped her conceive 14 children, saying in a video posted to RadarOnline.com that he did "absolutely nothing wrong."

The California Medical Board on Monday accused Suleman's Beverly Hills fertility doctor, Michael Kamrava, of gross negligence in three instances: transferring too many embryos, repeatedly transferring fresh embryos when frozen ones were available and failing to refer her for a mental health evaluation.

The board could revoke or suspend his license.

Suleman, who already had six other children, gave birth to the world's longest-living set of octuplets on Jan. 26. She has said she underwent the in vitro treatment that bore octuplets because she didn't want her frozen embryos to go to waste.

But the medical board alleges that Kamrava never used frozen embryos in any of her pregnancies, putting her health at increased risk.

Kamrava's lawyer, Peter Osinoff, said Monday that Suleman requested fresh embryos be used to improve her chances of success in each pregnancy. He could not immediately be reached Tuesday.

Suleman refuted those allegations in the video Tuesday saying that Kamrava told her he transferred whatever was left of the frozen embryos.

Seeming to have second thoughts, Suleman added she may have signed papers she hadn't read.

"Maybe that was my negligence," she said.

Though Suleman has also pledged to stop having children, she seemed to joke with Radar that Kamrava losing his license would curb her ability to have more babies.

"What am I going to do if I ever in the future want to go back?" she said with a laugh. "Really, what am I going to do?"

ACROSS THE NATION

Chopper crashes in remote Calif. forest; 4 men die

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—Three California Department of Fish and Game biologists and a pilot were killed Tuesday afternoon when their helicopter crashed in a craggy stretch of the Sierra National Forest where they were surveying wildlife. The crash happened in a narrow canyon near Redinger Lake after the Bell 206 helicopter struck a power line and sparked a blaze that scattered debris throughout a quarter-mile of brush, Madera County officials said. Killed in the accident were two longtime state scientists, 48-year-old Clu Cotter and 40-year-old Kevin O'Connor, as well as a scientists' aide, 31-year-old Tom Stolberg, all of Fresno. Pilot Dennis Donovan also died, but his hometown and age were not released.

Suspicious luggage at 2 US airports delays flights

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—Seemingly suspicious pieces of luggage delayed flights at two airports Tuesday, prompting evacuations in Minneapolis and closing a California airport where authorities discovered what turned out to be soft drink bottles filled with honey. A passenger's suitcase tested positive for TNT at Bakersfield's Meadows Field during a routine swabbing of the bag's exterior, Kern County Sheriff Donny Youngblood said. When Transportation Security Administration officials opened the bag, they found bottles filled with an amber liquid, he said. The bag's owner, Francisco Ramirez, told TSA officers that the bottles were filled with honey, Youngblood said. Further testing confirmed that honey was the only substance present in the bottles, said FBI spokesman Steve Dupre. No traces of explosives were found.

Fla. farmers scramble to save crops from cold

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Subfreezing temperatures across the South have Florida farmers worried that strawberry, tomato and other crops could be destroyed, with temperatures in even usually balmy Miami only in the 50s on Tuesday. Florida Gov. Charlie Crist signed an executive order that gives the state's Division of Emergency Management and other agencies the authority to provide growers with assistance. Throughout central and south Florida, farmers are trying to salvage millions of dollars worth of citrus and vegetable crops, spraying them in protective layers of ice and covering them in plastic. "The problem now is that we have a weeklong freeze predicted," said Ted Campbell, executive director for the Florida Strawberry Growers Association. "It's an endurance test."

Asia

Double atomic bomb survivor dies in Japan

TOKYO (AP)—Tsutomu Yamaguchi, the only person officially recognized as a survivor of both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings at the end of World War II, has died at age 93.

Yamaguchi was in Hiroshima on a business trip for his shipbuilding company on Aug. 6, 1945, when a U.S. B-29 dropped an atomic bomb on the city. He suffered serious burns to his upper body and spent the night in the city.

He then returned to his hometown of Nagasaki, about 300 kilometers (190 miles) southwest, which suffered a second U.S. atomic bomb attack three days later.

On Aug. 15, 1945, Japan surrendered, ending the war.

Yamaguchi

The mayor of Nagasaki said "a precious storyteller has been lost," in a message posted on the city's Web site Wednesday. Yamaguchi died Monday morning of stomach cancer, the mass circulation Mainichi, Asahi and Yomiuri newspapers reported.

Yamaguchi was the only person to be certified by the Japanese government as having been in both cities when they were attacked, although other dual survivors have also been identified.

"My double radiation exposure is now an official government record. It can tell the younger generation the horrifying history of the atomic bombings even after I die," Yamaguchi was quoted in the nationwide Mainichi newspaper last year.

In his later years, Yamaguchi gave talks about his experiences as an atomic bomb survivor and often expressed his hope that such weapons would be abolished.

He spoke at the United Nations in 2006, wrote books and songs about his experiences, and appeared in a documentary about survivors of both attacks.

Last month he was visited in the hospital by filmmaker James Cameron, director of "Titanic" and "Avatar," who is considering making a movie about the bombings, according to the Mainichi.

Immediately after the war, Yamaguchi worked as a translator for American forces in Nagasaki and later as a junior high school teacher.

Japan is the only country to have suffered atomic bombs. About 140,000 people were killed in Hiroshima and 70,000 in Nagasaki.

Yamaguchi is one of about 260,000 people who survived the attacks. Some bombing survivors have developed various illnesses from radiation exposure, including cancer and liver illnesses.

Certification as an atomic bomb survivor in Japan qualifies individuals for government compensation, including monthly allowances, free medical checkups and funeral costs.

NKorea began uranium program soon after 1994 deal

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea appears to have launched a uranium enrichment program as a new way of building atomic bombs soon after its 1994 deal with the U.S. to dismantle its existing plutonium nuclear weapons program, South Korea said Wednesday.

Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said in an interview with Yonhap news agency published Wednesday that the North appears to have launched its uranium enrichment program right after the 1994 agreement, or by 1996 at the latest.

Pyongyang last year said it had a uranium enrichment program, but did not say when it had started it.

Yu, who has expressed doubts in the past that North Korea will give up its nuclear program, did not give specific evidence as is common practice concerning intelligence matters. Yu's ministry confirmed his remarks.

If North Korea did launch their uranium enrichment program so soon after the 1994 deal with the U.S. it would underline the deceptive nature of the communist regime that has brandished nuclear threats to extract aid and concessions. It would also raise doubts whether Pyongyang has any intention to give up atomic ambitions.

"It appears the North started the uranium enrichment program right after the 1994 agreement or at least in 1996," Yu told Yonhap.

Atomic bombs can be made with highly enriched uranium or plutonium.

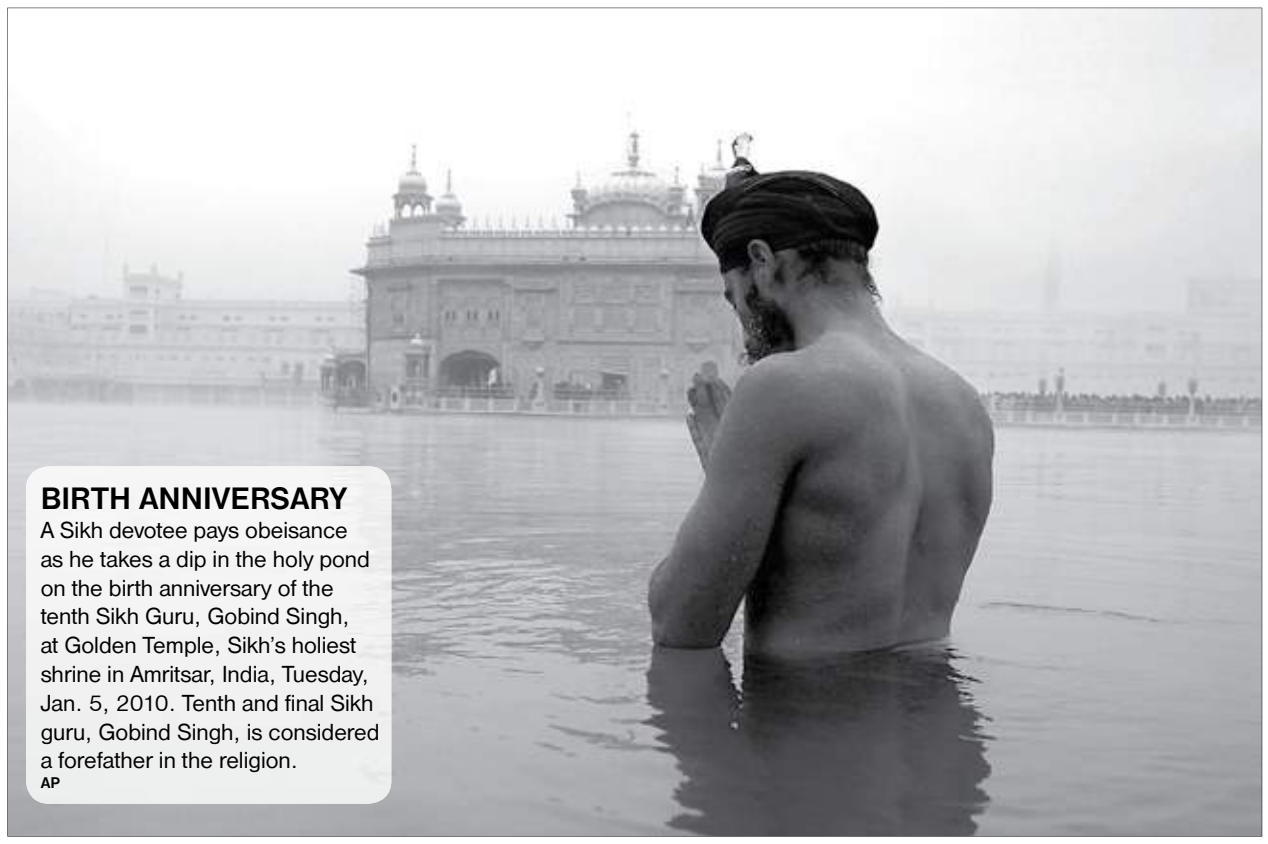
The 1994 pact between Pyongyang and Washington had defused an earlier nuclear crisis over Pyongyang's plutonium-based bomb program. Under that accord, the North agreed to freeze and ultimately dismantle its nuclear reactor in exchange for economic aid and diplomatic recognition.

The agreement fell apart in 2002 when the U.S. accused the North of running a secret uranium enrichment program, touching off the latest nuclear standoff.

North Korea had long rejected the uranium allegations. But in an attempt to further escalate tensions after its second-ever nuclear test in May last year, the regime claimed that it has such a program and succeeded in experimental uranium enrichment.

It has not said when that program started, and it was unclear whether Pyongyang would respond to Yu's allegation about the timing.

Yu said it is unclear how advanced that program is, how much uranium the North has enriched and how much of that has been turned into weapons.


BIRTH ANNIVERSARY
A Sikh devotee pays obeisance as he takes a dip in the holy pond on the birth anniversary of the tenth Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, at Golden Temple, Sikh's holiest shrine in Amritsar, India, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2010. Tenth and final Sikh guru, Gobind Singh, is considered a forefather in the religion.
AP

NATO official: US intel lacking in Afghanistan

KABUL (AP)—NATO's top intelligence officer has ordered significant changes in the way information is collected and shared in Afghanistan, saying that without reform the U.S. intelligence community will continue to be only "marginally relevant" to the counterinsurgency mission.

In a stinging assessment of the U.S. intelligence effort after eight years of war, U.S. Maj. Gen. Michael Flynn directed intelligence workers to focus less on the enemy and more on civilian life.

The report was compiled before a suicide bomber killed seven CIA operatives in eastern Afghanistan. The CIA is not mentioned in Flynn's report, which focuses more on the thousands of uniformed and civilian intelligence personnel serving with the Defense Department and joint interagency operations in the country.

Flynn's reform plan was published Monday by the Center for a New American Security think tank in Washington. Flynn acknowledges that releasing the 26-page report through a think tank was unconventional, but the report was aimed at commanders and intelligence professionals in Afghanistan and in the United States and Europe.

The report said field agents are not providing the kind of intelligence that analysts need to respond to inquiries from President Barack Obama and the top commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley McChrystal.

"These analysts are starved for information from the field—so starved, in fact, that many say their jobs feel more like fortune telling than serious detective work," said the report. "It is little wonder then that many decision makers rely more on newspapers than military intelligence to obtain `ground truth.'"

At least 18 die in China coal mine fire; 9 trapped

BEIJING (AP)—A fire in a coal mine in central China killed at least 18 workers, and search efforts continued for nine others trapped underground, state media reported Wednesday.

The Xinhua News Agency said underground cables caught fire Tuesday afternoon at the Lisheng coal mine in Xiangtan city in Hunan province.

The owner of the mine and a senior employee were detained, Xinhua said.

Nine more bodies were recovered Wednesday about 1,800 feet (540 meters) underground, bringing the death toll to 18, it said.

Seventy workers were underground when the fire started and 43 managed to escape, it said. Rescue workers were searching for the remaining nine, who were thought to be on another mining platform at least 2,000 feet (600 meters) underground, Xinhua said.

The fire was extinguished and the ventilation system was restored Tuesday, so there was a chance that some of the nine were still alive, it said.

China's mining industry is the world's deadliest, with most accidents blamed on poor safety as enterprises scramble to feed the country's voracious demand for coal. In November, 108 miners were killed in a coal mine blast in northeast China. It was the country's deadliest mining accident in two years.

China has been trying to close small mines or absorb them into larger state-owned ones. The Lisheng mine had just 180 workers, Xinhua said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Boat sinking after whaling clash in Antarctica

SYDNEY (AP)—A conservation group's boat had its bow sheared off and was taking on water Wednesday after it collided with a Japanese whaling ship in the frigid waters of Antarctica, the group said. The boat's six crew members were safely rescued. The clash was apparently the most serious in the past several years, during which the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society has sent vessels into far southern waters to try to harass the Japanese fleet into ceasing its annual whale cull. Clashes using hand-thrown stink bombs, ropes meant to tangle propellers and high-tech sound equipment have been common in recent years, and collisions between ships have sometimes happened.

2 charged over Malaysia fighter jet engines theft

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—A Malaysian court Wednesday charged an air force sergeant and a businessman with stealing two fighter jet engines, which were apparently smuggled to South America. The theft of the two engines from a military warehouse two years ago was publicized last month by a local daily newspaper, prompting opposition criticism that senior government or military figures may have been involved and the case covered up. Royal Malaysian Air Force Sgt. N. Tharmendran pleaded not guilty in court in central Selangor state to stealing the engines, said a court official, who declined to be named citing protocol. The charge carries a maximum jail term of 10 years.

Bomber kills 3 soldiers in Pakistani Kashmir

MUZAFFARABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A suicide bomber struck an army facility in the Pakistan-controlled portion of Kashmir on Wednesday, killing at least three soldiers and wounding 11 others, police said. Javed Iqbal, police chief in the Himalayan region of Kashmir, said the attacker targeted an army barracks near the town of Rawalakot. Another police official, Zubair Ahmed, said the attacker detonated his explosives after guards stopped him at the barracks gate. He said the dead and wounded had been transported to a military hospital. More than 500 people have been killed in Pakistan in attacks by militants, many of them targeting the government, since mid-October, when the army launched a major offensive against the Pakistani Taliban's stronghold of South Waziristan in the northwest.

World

Tensions grow as US heightens role in Yemen

SAN'A, Yemen (AP)—Friction emerged Tuesday in the growing alliance with the Yemeni government as the U.S. Embassy ended a two-day closure triggered by a terror threat from al-Qaida.

The Yemen government, which sent thousand of troops this week to remote provinces where al-Qaida has set up strongholds, has been angered by suggestions the state is too weakened to handle the fight against terrorists.

The embassy closure on Sunday became a case in point, rankling some officials who said it gave the appearance that Yemeni security forces could not protect the facilities.

On Tuesday, as the embassy reopened, the Interior Ministry insisted the fight against al-Qaida was under control, saying Yemeni forces "have imposed a security cordon around al-Qaida elements everywhere they are present and...are observing and pursuing them around the clock."

The government also has carried out a series of U.S.-backed strikes against militant hideouts in the past month.

More broadly, the intensified partnership with the U.S. presents dilemmas for Yemen.

The government is concerned that too public an American role in the anti-terror campaign could embarrass the government, presenting it as weak before a Yemeni public where mistrust of the United States runs high. It also could bring a backlash from Islamic conservatives who are a major pillar of support for President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Moreover, Yemeni officials appear worried American aid will come with pressure on Saleh to reform his rule in this unstable, divided nation.

The government is deeply sensitive over any hint of meddling in its internal affairs. But at the same time, it is being battered by multiple crises and needs assistance.

It has little control outside the capital, and heavily armed tribes hold sway over large parts of the mountainous, impoverished nation. Many tribes are disgruntled with Saleh, and some have allowed al-Qaida fighters to take refuge. On other fronts, it is battling Shiite rebels in the north and a revived separatist campaign in the once-independent south.

The U.S. Embassy reopened its doors following a two-day closure because of what Washington called an imminent threat of al-Qaida attack. The British Embassy, which had also closed, resumed operations, though consular and visa services remained closed.

Attacks involving Yemen

A branch of al-Qaida has operated in Yemen for years. Terrorist attacks involving Yemen and recent airstrikes on al-Qaida targets there:

2000 Small boat filled with explosives attacks USS Cole refueling in port of Aden; 17 sailors killed

2001 Failed attack on U.S. embassy in Yemen; Yemeni police arrest men with maps, explosives

2002 Small boat with explosives rams French oil tanker in Gulf of Aden; one sailor killed; 100,000 barrels of oil spilled

2008 Suicide car bomb misses U.S. embassy in Yemen; fire fight between attackers and Yemeni police

2009 Suicide bomber, with bomb concealed in underwear, fails to assassinate Saudi Arabia's counterterrorism chief

Book, Iran sojourn shed light on bin Laden family

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)—With a book written by one of Osama bin Laden's sons, and with news of a daughter sheltering in the Saudi Embassy in Iran, some of the blanks are being filled in on the life of the 9/11 mastermind's large family, including lurid details of his parenting style.

Two weeks ago, the son, Omar bin Laden, revealed that many of the children who had been with their father in Afghanistan escaped to Iran following the 2001 U.S.-led invasion, and were still together in a walled compound under Iranian guard.

Confirmation came with the news that a daughter, Eman bin Laden, had taken refuge in the Saudi Embassy in Tehran. Saudi officials are negotiating with the Iranians to allow Eman to return to Saudi Arabia, where she was born, and on Tuesday Omar bin Laden told The Associated Press that he, as well as his wife and mother, had applied for visas to go to Tehran and help speed Eman's case.

Omar and his wife, Zaina Alsabah, later e-mailed the AP to report that another bin Laden son, 16-year-old Bakr, had been allowed to leave on Dec. 25. It said "He arrived with great joy at the destination of his choice," and was with relatives. The e-mail did not disclose where Bakr was, but said he was not in Saudi Arabia.

Bin Laden's family was already under the spotlight in "Growing Up Bin Laden," written by Omar and his mother, Najwa bin Laden, and published in late October.

The book describes a brood of children—up to 20 from different wives—who were raised from an early age by an authoritarian father who shunned the luxury his inherited wealth could buy.

The mother and son write that the kids grew up in Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Afghanistan without laughter or toys, were routinely beaten, and lost their pets to painful death from poison gas experiments by their father's fighters.

When they became young adults, their father asked them to volunteer for suicide missions. When Omar protested, bin Laden was quoted as replying: "You hold no more a place in my heart than any man or boy in the entire country. This is true for all my sons."

CIA bomber coerced to work for Jordan spy agency

ZARQA, Jordan (AP)—The suspected Jordanian double agent who killed seven CIA officers in Afghanistan was thrown into jail by Jordanian intelligence to coerce him to track down al-Qaida's No. 2 leader, Mideast counterterrorism officials said Tuesday.

The 32-year-old doctor's allegiance was to al-Qaida from the start, however, and not to his Jordanian recruiters or their CIA friends—and it never wavered, a Middle East counterterrorism official told The Associated Press.

He and two other counterterrorism officials gave identical accounts of how and when Humam Khalil Abu-Mulal al-Balawi was recruited.

Jordanian intelligence believed the devout young Muslim had been persuaded to support U.S. efforts against al-Qaida in Afghanistan and wanted al-Balawi to help capture or kill Ayman al-Zawahri, a fellow doctor from Egypt who was Osama bin Laden's right-hand man, according to another counterterrorism official based in the Middle East.

All four spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment on matters involving the CIA and Jordan's national security.

Family and friends said al-Balawi, a father of two young daughters, had practiced medicine in a clinic at a Palestinian refugee camp near Zarqa, the hometown of slain al-Qaida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. One high school classmate, Mohammed Yousef, described al-Balawi as "brilliant," well-spoken and well-mannered, though he kept mostly to himself and did not mingle much with relatives or friends.

The doctor also spoke openly about wanting to die in a holy war, Yousef said, adding that in Internet postings he called tirelessly for jihad against Israel and the United States.

"If the love of jihad entered a man's heart, it will not abandon him, even if he wanted so," al-Balawi said in an interview published by the Ana Al-Muslim, or "I, the Muslim," Web site.

Other Western embassies maintained heightened security, including the French and Czech, which closed to the public, and the Spanish and German, which were restricting the number of visitors.

The U.S. Embassy said it reopened after Yemeni actions the day before addressed the threats—an apparent reference to clashes Monday northeast of the capital in which two al-Qaida fighters were killed.

Still, several Yemeni security and government officials privately expressed anger over the closures. The officials spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of U.S.-Yemeni ties.

The Interior Ministry suggested the closings were unnecessary, insisting "security is good in the capital and the provinces, and there is no fear for the lives of any foreigner or foreign embassy." It said Yemeni forces had captured five militants in recent days in the capital and the western region of Hodeida.

Cuba protests US screening of airline passengers

HAVANA (AP)—Cuba summoned the top U.S. diplomat on the island Tuesday to protest extra screening for Cuban citizens flying into the United States, calling the measure a "hostile action" meant to justify America's trade embargo.

Josefina Vidal Ferreiro, director of the Cuban Foreign Ministry's North American affairs office, said the new security controls were "discriminatory and selective."

"We categorically reject this new hostile action by the government of the United States against Cuba," she told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview.

Vidal Ferreiro said she lodged the protest in an afternoon meeting with Jonathan Farrar, the head of the U.S. Interest Section, which Washington maintains in Cuba instead of an embassy. Cuba's top diplomat in Washington delivered a similar message to State Department officials earlier in the day, she said.

The United States imposed the airline security measures Monday following an apparent attempt by a Nigerian man to blow up a passenger jet as it approached Detroit on Christmas Day.

Among the 14 nations whose citizens will face increased scrutiny are four—Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria—that the U.S. government considers state sponsors of terrorism.

Cuba has been on that list since the 1980s, but has always maintained its inclusion had more to do with the United States' antagonistic policy toward the communist-governed nation than with evidence that it sponsors terrorism.

Washington and Havana have been at odds since shortly after Fidel Castro took power in Cuba on New Year's Day 1959. The United States has maintained a trade embargo on the island—which the Cuban government refers to as a blockade—for 47 years.

WORLD BRIEFS

UK privacy concerns likely to impede body scanners

LONDON (AP)—Britain's government wants to quickly deploy full body scanners at U.K. airports to fight an expanded terrorist threat, but privacy concerns—and fears that children may be exploited—seem likely to slow the plan. Privacy campaigners and children's rights groups say the technology, now being tested at Manchester Airport, violates British and European law by producing sexually explicit images of children. They say the machines cannot be allowed because they can clearly show a child's genitalia when a boy or girl walks through the airport scanners, which are designed to reveal concealed liquids, explosives or weapons to assure the safety of commercial air travelers. Ian Dowty, legal adviser to Action on Rights for Children, said he believes it would be a criminal offense to operate the scanners or to direct anyone to operate them if they are used to produce images of children under the age of 18.

Terror suspect raised no suspicion in Amsterdam

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—Dutch investigators said Tuesday they found no evidence that a Nigerian suspected of trying to blow up a U.S.-bound airliner contacted accomplices at Amsterdam's airport, and that he already had the explosives on him when he arrived on a connecting flight. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab flew to Schiphol Airport from Lagos, Nigeria, before boarding a Northwest Airlines flight to Detroit on Christmas Day. He allegedly tried to blow up the plane by injecting chemicals into a package of pentrite explosive concealed in his underwear. The failed attack caused popping sounds and flames that passengers and crew rushed to extinguish. Abdulmutallab is in U.S. custody charged with trying to blow up the Northwest flight.

Israeli officers cancel UK trip for fear of arrest

JERUSALEM (AP)—An Israeli military delegation has canceled an official visit to Britain, officials said Tuesday, the latest in a string of politicians and army officials to put off travel to the U.K. because of fears of war crimes prosecution. Israel complained that the practice, spearheaded by pro-Palestinian activists, is harming relations, and Britain's visiting attorney general said an urgent solution must be found. The Israelis called off their trip because their British army hosts could not guarantee they would not be arrested, the Israeli officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. Neither the Israeli military nor the British government would comment. The incident underlined the effectiveness of a pro-Palestinian legal campaign to harass Israeli officials in the wake of war crimes allegations after Israel's devastating invasion of Gaza a year ago to stop rocket attacks.

Environment

Isle of Wight owl shelter with waiting list

By MIKE DI PAOLA
(C) 2010, BLOOMBERG NEWS

On a gray, drizzly day, I find the Owl and Monkey Haven on the Isle of Wight is full, and the waiting list is growing, thanks to a certain young wizard.

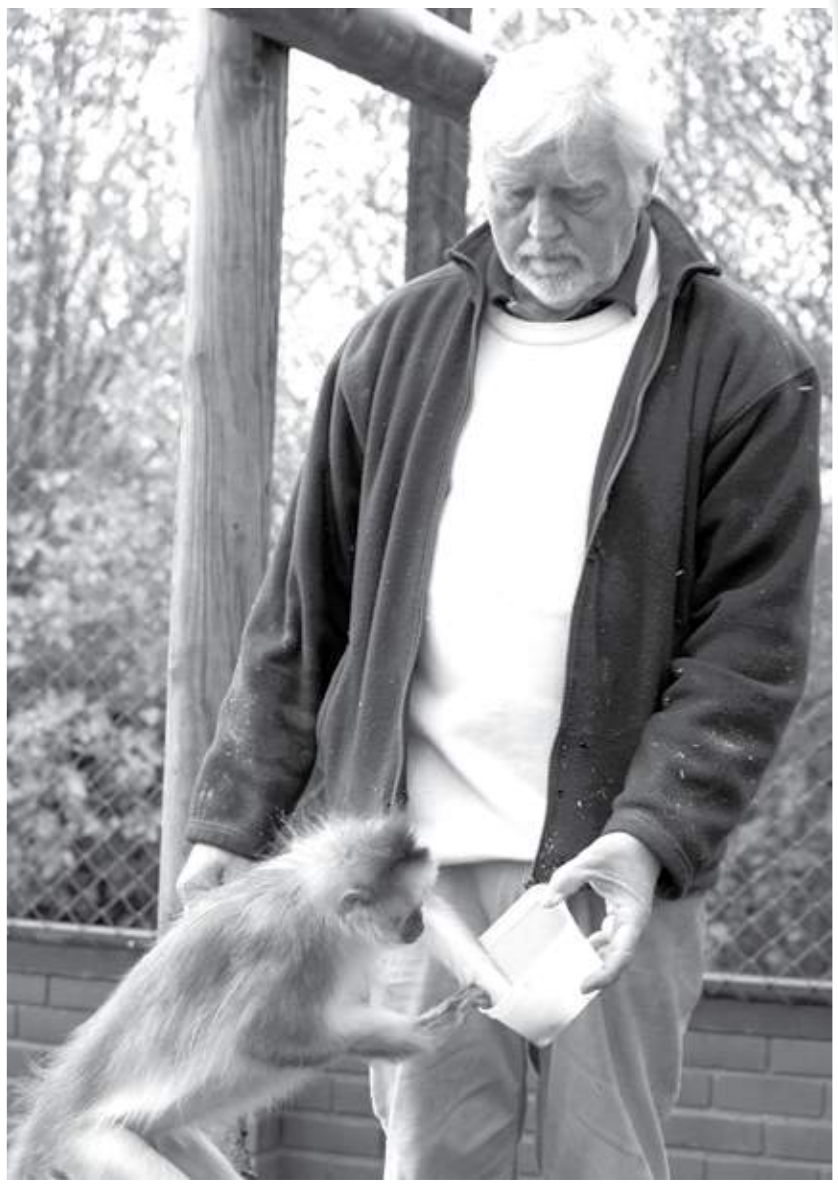
"There is an increase in the owl population at the moment because of this Harry Potter thing," says Don Walser, builder and owner of the sanctuary near the island's center. "More and more people want to keep them as pets. Unfortunately, they don't make the ideal pet."

Walser, 64, reckons there are at least 30,000 owls kept in English gardens. These backyard arrangements usually provide inadequate space for a sizable aviary.

"They build some tiny cage to keep it in, and it's not ideal for the bird," he says. "Eventually people get fed up and they want to find a new home for it." J. K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter novels, was unavailable to comment, according to her associates.

A carpenter by trade, Walser began rescuing owls 30 years ago when he lived in Northampton, England, and the birds' numbers were in decline. Some had been injured on roads, others displaced as old barns were converted into human homes or Dutch elm disease killed off their tree habitat.

"We got involved in a release program, where we acquired a pair of barn owls and were breeding and releasing them. I personally released about 54 back into the wild," Walser says proudly.



BLOOMBERG NEWS

Don Walser, owner and builder of the Owl and Monkey Haven, gives a treat to a sanctuary resident on the Isle of Wight. The rescue shelter is home to owls as well as capuchin monkeys, gibbons, langurs and rhesus macaques.

BLOOMBERG NEWS

A barn owl at the Owl and Monkey Haven sanctuary on the Isle of Wight. Aviaries at the sanctuary also house eagle owls, buzzards, and at least one kestrel.

Walser got started with monkeys after he took in a pair for a sick friend and the temporary arrangement became permanent when the friend died. He soon began acquiring surplus monkeys from breeding zoos, which can keep only so many males.

Needing more space, Walser moved to the Isle of Wight, a half-hour ferry ride from England's south coast, in 1998 and bought five acres. He started planning the sanctuary in 2000 but did not get permits for the project until 2004, when he and his son began building.

The sanctuary is almost ready to open to the public. Animated screeches rise from the primate cages, which house capuchin monkeys, gibbons, rhesus macaques, brown langurs and marmosets. Dignified hoots come from the row of brand new aviaries, home to barn owls, enormous European eagle owls, a Bengal eagle owl, a pair of buzzards, a kestrel, and three plush white snowy owls, the magnificent bird most associated with the boy wizard of book and film.

"We'll have to build more birdhouses because there are more birds waiting to come," Walser says. "As soon as we let people know we were doing this, they were asking if we could take animals in before we'd even built the cages. It was ridiculous."

Walser financed the project by mortgaging his house and taking out a couple of loans, and further expansion is out of the question for now. The sanctuary has received some modest donations from suppliers he knew in his carpentry days, and it gets help from retailer Marks & Spencer, which donates expired produce to the cause—a largess that makes the monkeys happy, since they favor pricier items like avocados and asparagus. Walser has a small staff of volunteers he hopes to be able to pay soon.

Popular children's films affect animal populations on this side of the pond as well.

"Shelters will see particular animals given up to them after the fad passes," says Kim Intino, director of shelter services at the Humane Society of the United States, noting that turtle demand went up when Ninjas made the big screen, as did Dalmatians before them. Following the worldwide popularity of "Finding Nemo" clownfish were the rage—a trend that put the species' coral habitat at risk from overfishing.

Walser has also been asked to take on reptile refugees (not, to his knowledge, linked to any film), but he is passing on that, as it would require yet more specialized housing.

"Mainly we're the Owl and Monkey Haven," he said. "We're going to stick with that for now."

SCIENCE PICKS

United States using less water today

The United States uses less water today than it did 35 years ago, despite a 30 percent population increase. Declines in water use are partly attributable to alternative cooling methods at power plants and more efficient irrigation systems. According to the latest USGS water use report, nearly half of all water used in the United States goes to cooling thermoelectric power plants. Irrigation accounts for 31 percent. Eleven percent of water is used for public supply, and the remaining 9 percent is used for industrial, livestock, aquaculture, mining and rural domestic uses.

Caves provide Martians (or scientists) a new place to hide

Caves might lie beneath a series of depressions discovered on Mars. These caves could provide shelter for future Mars exploration missions. They could also shed light on whether microbial life forms have ever existed on the "Red Planet." The depressions were detected by the USGS Astrogeology Science Center using high-resolution images conveyed through Mars-orbiting satellites. Scientists believe some of these caves were created from a massive volcano, when solid ceilings of cooled material formed over lava channels during ancient volcanic eruptions. Sections of these ceilings collapsed at some point to form the observed skylight entrances, or caves.

Thawing Arctic may mean more atmospheric carbon

One of the world's most important sinks of carbon could start to release its contents into the atmosphere. A new study by the USGS and the University of Alaska at Fairbanks shows that the Arctic has been responsible for up to 25 percent of the earth's carbon sink in recent decades. The carbon enters the Arctic from the atmosphere and is trapped in the permafrost, the frozen layer of soil underneath the land's surface. This layer is an effective carbon sink because the permafrost is too cold to for the carbon to decompose very quickly. However, global warming is causing the permafrost to thaw, exposing the previously frozen soil to decomposition and erosion, and could make the permafrost a source of atmospheric carbon, rather than a sink.

ON THE NET

■ For more information, visit www.usgs.gov

Wind energy: A scare for bats and birds

Wind energy is a promising source of "green energy." However, unprecedented numbers of certain bat species are consistently dying at wind turbines, and birds are also affected. USGS scientists are investigating what makes bats and birds vulnerable to turbines, as well as the extent to which turbines may be affecting their populations. Scientists are also looking into possible solutions for reducing bat mortality at wind energy facilities.

Whooping Cranes are flying high!

The Class of 2009 whooping cranes has begun its journey! Twenty-one young whoopers hatched in captivity are now migrating 1,285 miles from Wisconsin to Florida, guided by ultralight aircraft. These migrating cranes were raised in captivity, cared for by USGS scientists wearing crane costumes to mask the human form and ensure the cranes remain wild. After being guided by the ultralight aircraft to their wintering habitat in Florida, amazingly these cranes will be able to find their way back to Wisconsin on their own in the spring. In the 1940s there were only 15 of these large, white birds. Today there are 350 whoopers living in the wild, and another 150 in captivity. Watch these cranes in a video or learn more about this project online at http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/Cranes.htm.

Giant snakes threaten ecosystems

Introduced giant constrictor snakes pose major risks to ecosystems in the United States. Already in South Florida, breeding populations of boa constrictors and Burmese pythons have become established and appear to be spreading. Other constrictor snakes caught in the wild include anacondas and other python species. These non-native snakes are likely to thrive in suitable environments because they mature early, produce many young, travel long distances, and can eat native birds and mammals. Adequate control tools have not been established, although several are being tested. A new USGS report documents the occurrence of these snakes, the potential for further invasion, and ecosystem risks in the United States.

Streamgages: the silent superhero

Whether you drink water from your tap, use electricity or canoe down your local river, chances are, you benefit from USGS streamgages. A streamgage measures the height and how much water is flowing in a river or stream. This information is used by drinking water suppliers, water treatment plant operators, engineers, wildlife managers, recreationalists and many others. There are over 7,500 streamgages in the United States that transmit real-time data by satellite every one to four hours. This streamflow information is available to everyone for free online. The amount of water in rivers or streams is not constant, and knowing how much water is available is critical to those who use and manage the water.

Source: U.S. Geological Services

Life & Style

Bea Neidorf, 94, of Washington, is one of 10 grandmothers who offer advice in the new book *How to Sew a Button and Other Nifty Things Your Grandmother Knew.* Here, she holds a homemade apple pie.

THE WASHINGTON POST

What would grandma do?

Self-help from your grandmother

By EMILY LANGER
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—It all started with a terrible pie.

Erin Bried, a 35-year-old senior staff writer at *Self* magazine, wanted to impress some dinner guests with a homemade dessert. And it worked, at first. "Who makes pie these days?" her company exclaimed as she placed her strawberry-rhubarb masterpiece on the table.

Then they took their first bites, and Bried discovered that what she'd thought was rhubarb was actually Swiss chard.

"That's when it hit me," she writes in the introduction to her new book, *How to Sew a Button and Other Nifty Things Your Grandmother Knew* (Ballantine Books, $15). "When I was a child, I used to help my grandmother clip rhubarb out of the garden; now, as an adult, I can't even identify the vegetable in the grocery store."

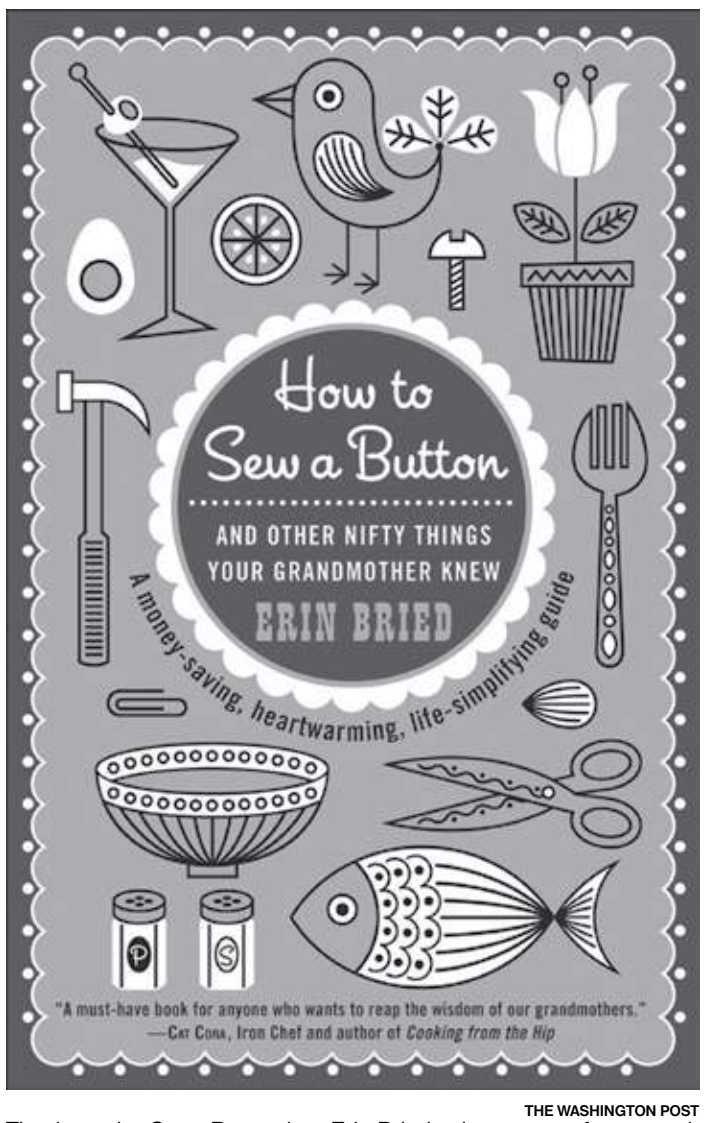
At that I had to think of my grandmother, who made the finest pie you could ever find. (Take it from her friend, who said at her funeral nine years ago that pies in heaven had just gotten a lot better.)

"What is simultaneously comforting and alarming about my domestic incompetence," Bried continues in the book, "is that I am hardly alone. I'm joined by millions of women, Gen Xers and Gen Yers, who either have consciously rejected household endeavors in favor of career or, even more likely, were simply raised in the ultimate age of convenience and consumerism. Why do for ourselves, we shrug, when we can pay someone else to do it for us?"

Thanks to the Great Recession, Bried writes, many of our grandmothers' money-saving household skills are back in style. So she set out to learn not only to sew a button and make a pie, but to roast a chicken, plant a vegetable garden, knit a scarf, spring clean, make the most of a night in—and to do many other things that her grandmothers and others knew and know, things that today can seem rather complicated.

For her day job at *Self*, Bried often interviews A-list celebrities. For this study of homemaking, she interviewed 10 grandmothers across the country, none of them famous but each of them, she said, just as worthy of being celebrated.

One was 94-year-old Bea Neidorf, who has lived in Washington since shortly before the end of World War II and still volunteers at the Kennedy Center and the Hillwood museum. Of all the keepsakes on the corner table in her dining room, "How to Sew a Button" is the most modern by several decades. The pink paperback sits cheerfully next to a display of black-and-white family photographs.


How to Sew a Button
AND OTHER NIFTY THINGS YOUR GRANDMOTHER KNEW
ERIN BRIED
A money-saving, heartwarming, life-simplifying guide
"A must-have book for anyone who wants to reap the wisdom of our grandmothers."
—Cat Cora, Iron Chef and author of Cooking from the Hip

THE WASHINGTON POST

Thanks to the Great Recession, Erin Bried writes, many of our grandmothers' money-saving household skills are back in style. For her new book, *How to Sew a Button and Other Nifty Things Your Grandmother Knew*, she interviewed 10 grandmothers across the country.

"It was funny," Neidorf said as she laughed about being interviewed for Bried's book, or any book. "I would think that people would know how to hem some pants."

Spend some time with her, or just open Bried's book, and you'll see that Neidorf is more than a seamstress. In the chapter about cleaning, she gives this advice: "Vinegar is like a miracle cleaner." In the section on thriving, no matter how little you have, she says: "Good posture is very important. ... Look straight out at the world and say, 'Here I am!' " On the topic of parenting, she offers: "Reading your kids bedtime stories is a wonderful thing and so intimate. Do the voices." And on married life, she cautions: "for a happy marriage, don't think of yourself."

Neidorf recognizes that modern life leaves little time for some of the time-consuming skills that, for her, were just "part of your routine of being a homemaker." She is quick to note, however, that she and other grandmothers weren't born knowing how to do everything. She still remembers the first real dinner she cooked as a newlywed: steak, baked potatoes, string beans and gingerbread with whipped cream.

"How to Sew a Button" is a handy guide to running your household and, in many ways, your life. Each how-to is doable, but homemaking isn't always easy. Maybe for fear of scaring off readers, Bried tries to buck you up ("Put on some good music. Remember, the word mop doesn't end with an e," she writes in explaining how to mop). And she prods you along before you give up ("Get over yourself," she writes, explaining how to remove a chicken's innards).

Any questions, about anything? Find a grandmother.

In the presence of such a knowledgeable one, I asked Neidorf how she makes her pies. After some hesitation, she confessed that she doesn't fully agree with the section in the book titled *Find a Slice of Heaven: How to Make a Pie*. After browning the crust at 425 degrees for 10 minutes, she reduces the oven temperature to 350 degrees, a step not included in Bried's recipe. At first Neidorf didn't want to tell Bried, whom she adores, but she decided to speak out on behalf of a greater cause: "I don't want everybody to burn up their pies!"

I couldn't help but think that it is only right for the book to be imperfect, at least according to Neidorf. Just as it was only right that the first Thanksgiving pies I made after my grandmother died were terrible. As my mother said, she probably would have been secretly pleased: It just goes to show how much grandmothers know.

SC first lady's memoir to be released next month

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)—South Carolina first lady Jenny Sanford's memoir about dealing with her husband's infidelity will be published next month instead of in May as originally planned.

The 240-page "Staying True" goes on sale Feb. 5, according to the Web site for Ballantine Books, an imprint of Random House Inc.

Jenny Sanford filed for divorce from Gov. Mark Sanford last month and a final hearing on the petition is scheduled for late February. But Random House spokeswoman Theresa Zoro said moving up the publication date had nothing to do with the divorce.

AP

In a Friday, June 26, 2009 photo, Jenny Sanford, wife of South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford, speaks about her husband's recent affair admission in Sullivans Island, S.C.

"The book was done and we wanted to get it out there," she said.

The governor, once a rising star in the Republican Party and a possible 2012 presidential contender, disappeared for five days last summer and returned to publicly confess an affair with an Argentine woman. His staff told reporters he was hiking the Appalachian Trail, but he was actually in Argentina.

The publisher's Web site says the memoir will reveal Jenny Sanford's private ordeal over her husband's public betrayal. The book, which has a portrait of the first lady sitting by the beach on its cover, will tell how she learned just a day ahead of the public that her husband had not ended his affair with the woman he later called his soul mate.

"She reveals the source of her determination to be honest and forthright instead of the victim in the tabloid passion play that gripped the nation in June 2009," the synopsis says.

Two days after Mark Sanford's confession, Jenny Sanford told the AP she learned about the affair in January 2009 and told her husband to break it off, even though he asked her permission to see his mistress.

"It's one thing to forgive adultery; it's another thing to condone it," she said.

Jenny Sanford, a Georgetown-educated, former Wall Street vice president, did not stand next to her husband during his pained public confession.

She later moved out of the governor's mansion in Columbia and is now living with the couple's four sons at their beachfront home on Sullivans Island near Charleston.

Investigators seek cause of death of LA socialite

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Casey Johnson, an heiress to the Johnson & Johnson fortune, lived the life of a Hollywood socialite—partying with Paris Hilton, posing for paparazzi, becoming engaged to bisexual reality TV star Tila Tequila and like her idol Marilyn Monroe, dying young.

An autopsy Tuesday found no evidence of trauma on the body of the 30-year-old Johnson and a determination of the cause of death was deferred pending toxicological tests and microscopic studies that could take eight weeks or more.

Johnson was diagnosed with diabetes as a child, but it was unclear if that had a role in her death.

Johnson's body was found Monday in the home where she lived behind big wooden gates bearing the name "Grumblenot" in a quiet neighborhood. There were no signs of foul play, police Officer Gregory Baek said.

But there were signs of trouble in tabloid tales of a life of privilege seemingly spinning out of control.

Johnson was facing criminal charges alleging she burglarized a friend's home, reportedly had her adopted daughter taken away by her mother, and once publicly accused her father's sister of stealing her boyfriend.

Johnson was the daughter of New York Jets owner Robert Wood "Woody" Johnson IV. He is also chairman of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and co-authored the book, "Managing Your Child's Diabetes."

Woody Johnson learned of his daughter's death a day after his team clinched an NFL playoff spot for the first time in three seasons.

Jets head coach Rex Ryan opened his press conference Tuesday by offering condolences to the owner.

"It's obviously a tragedy for Mr. Johnson and his family," Ryan said.

Casey Johnson had no role in the health care products company that her great-great-grandfather founded in 1886, even though she and her two younger sisters were heirs to the fortune.

The family's involvement with the corporation ended decades ago.

AP

In this photo taken on Thursday, Aug. 14, 2008, Casey Johnson arrives at the grand opening of Apple Lounge in West Hollywood, Calif. Spokesman Jesse Derris said Monday Jan. 4, 2010, Johnson was found dead in her home in Los Angeles.

Like her friend and former high school classmate Hilton, Johnson's exploits were detailed in tabloid reports of partying and sexual escapades. Johnson became a staple of the New York Post's Page Six, the gossip column where she was mockingly dubbed the "baby-oil heiress."

She was one of the subjects of the 2002 Manhattan documentary "It Girls," but screen fame eluded her.

Johnson told Vanity Fair in a 2006 interview that her decision to turn down Hilton's invitation to be her co-star on "The Simple Life" reality show was "the stupidest mistake of my life."

In a Twitter posting Tuesday, Hilton said she was devastated by the death of her friend.

"In bed crying, looking at baby pictures of Casey, Nicky and I. I feel so upset. I feel like I've lost a sister. My heart is broken. Miss her," she wrote.

Johnson and Tila Tequila canoodled and announced they were engaged in a Web video last month. Tequila referred to Johnson as "my Wifey" in a Twitter posting after Johnson's death.

Johnson was recently arrested for investigation of stealing $22,000 in lingerie, mail, jewelry and other items from the Hollywood home of model friend Jasmine Lennard.

She pleaded not guilty last month to burglary and receiving stolen property, and had a preliminary hearing scheduled on Feb. 2, district attorney's spokeswoman Jane Robison said.

Johnson also was reportedly in a custody fight over her adopted daughter with her mother, Sale Johnson.

Casey Johnson adopted the child as a baby from Kazakhstan in 2007 and named her Ava-Monroe after her idol, Marilyn Monroe.

"I see a lot of similarities between us," Casey said about Monroe in the Vanity Fair interview. "Her life makes me sad. I don't think she was very happy.

"They thought she was some dumb blonde, and she wasn't. She was a smart, smart broad. And I think that sometimes people look at me and think, 'Oh, Casey Johnson, she's stupid, she's blonde, she's an heiress, blah, blah, blah.'"

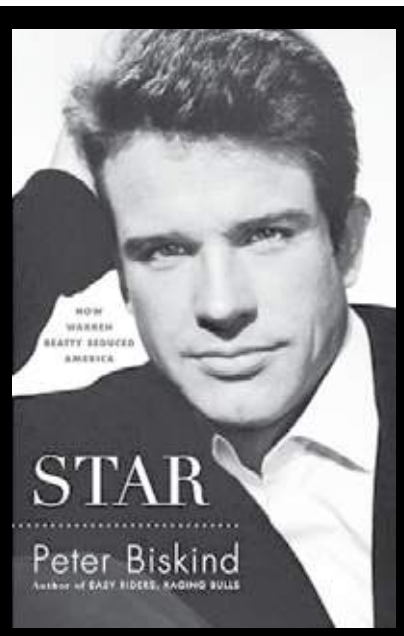
How many women did Warren Beatty really sleep with?

By PATRICK GOLDSTEIN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Peter Biskind's new biography of Warren Beatty, "Star: How Warren Beatty Seduced America," hasn't even hit bookstore shelves yet. But it's already caused an uproar after the New York Post started running some juicy excerpts from the book focusing on Topic A: Exactly how many women did the famous Hollywood lothario actually sleep with?

According to Biskind, who caused a similar media maelstrom with his 1998 book, "Easy Riders, Raging Bulls"—about the excesses of '60s filmmakers—it wasn't all that hard, based on "simple arithmetic," to come up with a perfectly plausible guesstimate. According to the Post, Biskind estimates the bedded-by-Beatty women figure at "12,775, give or take, a figure that does not include daytime quickies, drive-bys, casual gropings, stolen kisses and so on." (If anyone can offer a good definition of what might constitute a Warren Beatty "drive-by," we'd love to hear it.)

Biskind's literary formula, judging from his previous books, is pretty simple, combining a shrewd analysis of the filmmaking process with salacious insider stories about sexual adventures and assorted misbehavior. Judging from the Post excerpts, there is plenty of the latter. One offers a glimpse of the young Beatty's affair with Joan Collins, whom he took up with after dumping Jane Fonda. Collins complained about Beatty's insatiable sex drive. As Biskind writes:



"One Sunday morning, exhausted, Collins stumbled out of bed. Dragging on a forbidden cigarette, she said, 'I don't think I can last much longer. He never stops—it must be all those vitamins he takes. ... In a few years, I'll be worn out.' Later, a skeptic asked her if they really had sex seven times a day. She replied, 'Maybe he did, but I just lay there.'"

Needless to say, Beatty, now a happily married 72-year-old pater familias, hasn't been taking all of this lying down. Hollywood super lawyer Bert Fields, acting on Beatty's behalf, has popped up, loudly denying that Biskind's book was authorized in any way by the veteran movie star. (Not that anyone who has ever met Beatty would ever imagine in a million years that Beatty would ever authorize a tell-all book about his life.) Still, Fields has worked up quite a head of steam, going on the offensive by telling the Huffington Post that "Mr. Biskind's tedious and boring book ... contains many false assertions and purportedly quotes Mr. Beatty as saying things he never said."

I have two thoughts on this whole issue. First off, if Fields thinks that tossing out the words "tedious" and "boring" will stop people from trolling through the book, eager to soak up all the good, sexy tall tales, I suspect he is sorely underestimating the libido of the American nonfiction reader. And second, if that 12,775 figure is correct, imagine how good the late NBA great Wilt Chamberlain must be feeling right now. After all, it was Chamberlain who once famously boasted about having sex with 20,000 women. If even Beatty can't top that mark, then Chamberlain's bedded-by record, along with his career points scored totals, remain records that may never be broken.

'Avatar,' 'Trek,' 8 others score Producer nominations

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Science-fiction scored big with the Producers Guild of America, with "Avatar," "Star Trek" and "District 9" taking three of the 10 nominations Tuesday for the group's top film honors.

The group representing Hollywood producers also handed best-picture nominations to the animated blockbuster "Up," the World War II hit "Inglourious Basterds" and the critical favorites "The Hurt Locker," "Precious: Based on the Novel `Push' By Sapphire," "Up in the Air," "An Education" and "Invictus."

The Producers Guild followed the lead of the Academy Awards and doubled its best-picture field to 10 nominees this season.

"Up" also is nominated for best animated film, along with "9," "Coraline," "Fantastic Mr. Fox" and "The Princess and the Frog."

The guild picks typically are a good forecast for the eventual best-picture lineup at the Oscars, whose nominations come out Feb. 2.

If Oscar choices run the same way, the show will gain the mass appeal organizers had sought to bring to Hollywood's biggest party. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences doubled the best-picture field last summer, hoping to bring a broader range of films into the awards fold, including the sort of blockbuster fare the Oscars often have lacked in recent years.

"The Dark Knight," 2008's biggest hit, earned a best-picture nomination a year ago from the Producers Guild but was overlooked for the top Oscar category. Its omission was cited as a factor in the decision to expand the best-picture field, Oscar organizers saying they felt there were more than five films deserving nominations.

TV ratings for the Oscar show, on a general decline over the last few decades, usually climb in years when huge hits are in the running. The Oscars had their biggest audience ever when "Titanic," the modern box-office king with $1.8 billion worldwide, dominated the ceremony 12 years ago.

"Avatar" is "Titanic" director James Cameron's first narrative film since then. The sci-fi epic has topped $350 million domestically and shot past the $1 billion mark worldwide, and it appears headed to the No. 2 spot in the record books globally, behind "Titanic."

The Producers Guild lineup includes four other big hits—"Up" and "Star Trek," both $200 million smashes, and "District 9" and "Inglourious Basterds," which topped $100 million each.

AP

This undated file photo released by 20th Century Fox, the character Neytiri, voiced by Zoe Saldana, is shown in a scene from "Avatar."

The other nominees present a mix of star power and critical raves.

The recession-era comic drama "Up in the Air" has been an adult-audience favorite with plenty of box-office potential left and the celebrity appeal of star George Clooney.

The Iraq War drama "The Hurt Locker" has dominated key honors from critics groups and did solid independent-cinema business. The teen dramas "Precious" and "An Education" and the South Africa tale "Invictus," directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon, also have been strong arthouse earners featuring some of the year's most acclaimed performances.

Other Producers Guild nominees Tuesday:

■ Documentary: "Burma VJ," "The Cove," "Sergio," "Soundtrack for a Revolution."

■ Long-form television: "Georgia O'Keeffe," "Grey Gardens," "Little Dorrit," "Prayers for Bobby," "The Prisoner," "Taking Chance."

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Sherlock Holmes

Friday & Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:55
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Mon thru Thurs		4:05	7:05	

Robert Downey, Jr., Jude Law
Action, Mystery • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous super-sleuth, Sherlock Holmes, gets an update with this adaptation of Lionel Wigram's comic book series by writer/director Guy Ritchie (RocknRolla) starring Robert Downey Jr. as the titular detective, with Jude Law stepping into the shoes of his sidekick, Dr. Watson. Heading up the rest of the cast are RocknRolla's Mark Strong as the film's villain, Blackwood, and Rachel McAdams portraying the love interest, Irene Adler.

It's Complicated

Friday & Saturday	1:30	4:20	7:10	9:40
Sunday	1:30	4:20	7:10	
Mon thru Thurs		4:20	7:10	

Meryl Streep, Alec Baldwin
Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis
Veteran writer/director Nancy Meyers (Something's Gotta Give, What Women Want) returns to familiar romantic comedy territory with this untitled production for Universal Pictures starring Meryl Streep as a woman who finds herself caught in the middle of dual romantic advances from two suitors (played by Steve Martin and Alec Baldwin).

Alvin & The Chipmunks: The Sqeakquel

Friday & Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:25	9:30
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:25	
Mon thru Thurs		4:15	7:25	

Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler
Children, Family • Rated PG

Synopsis
The lovable singing-and-dancing trio of famous marmots continues their big-screen hijinks with this follow-up to the 20th Century Fox smash-hit live-action/CG family comedy, this time incorporating a female version of the group entitled the Chipettes. Dr. Dolittle's Betty Thomas helms with Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler, and Jesse McCartney returning as the voices of Alvin, Simon, and Theodore.

Avatar

Friday & Saturday	12:50	3:55	6:55	10:00
Sunday	12:50	3:55	6:55	
Mon thru Thurs		3:55	6:55	

Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

Did You Hear About The Morgans?

Friday & Saturday	1:20	4:10	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:20	4:10	7:30	
Mon thru Thurs		4:10	7:30	

Hugh Grant, Sarah Jessica Parker
Comedy • Rated PG 13

The Princess And The Frog

Friday & Saturday	1:10	4:30	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:10	4:30	7:20	
Mon thru Thurs		4:30	7:20	

Anika Noni Rose, John Goodman
Comedy, Family • Rated G

Twilight Saga: New Moon

Friday & Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	9:45
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Mon thru Thurs		4:00	7:00	

Robert Pattinson, Kristen Stewart
Thriller, Romance • Rated PG 13

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Viola Davis joins Denzel Washington in 'Fences'

NEW YORK (AP)—Oscar nominee Viola Davis will join Denzel Washington in the revival of August Wilson's "Fences," arriving on Broadway in April.

"Fences" will open April 26 at the Cort Theatre with preview performances beginning April 14, producers Carole Shorenstein Hays and Scott Rudin announced Tuesday. The production will be directed by Kenny Leon.

Davis will play Rose, a woman, who, according to the actress, "unknowingly gives up her dreams and her power for love." Washington—winner of Academy Awards for "Training Day" and "Glory"—will portray her husband, the patriarchal Troy Maxson. The pivotal role of their son is still to be cast.

In "Fences," Wilson "explores the life ... of the everyday man," Davis said in an interview. "But ... he places all of those struggles (within the context) of African-American men who also are facing the obstacle of race in America, which is a double whammy."

She said "Fences," part of Wilson's 10-play cycle about the black experience in 20th-century America, is also about the most basic of human issues: "hope, love, dreams, fatherhood and death."

AP

In this April 23, 2009 file photo, actress Viola Davis attends the 4th Annual Tribeca Film Festival Artists Dinner hosted by CHANEL in New York.

Davis has appeared on Broadway in two Wilson plays—"Seven Guitars" and "King Hedley II"—and was nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in the film version of John Patrick Shanley's "Doubt." She won a featured-actress Tony Award in 2001 for her work in "King Hedley II."

"August would always sit in rehearsals with his eyes closed and his head down while the actors spoke," she said. "If you missed one word, his eyes would pop open, he would grab a script and look at it, then look at the actor and start pointing, 'Ah, you missed a word, you missed a line and messed up the whole rhythm.'"

"But if you got it right, you could see how he enjoyed it," she said. "It was like someone enjoying a great piece of music."

The original 1987 production of "Fences" starred James Earl Jones as Troy, Mary Alice as his wife and Courtney B. Vance as their son. It won both the Tony Award for best play and the Pulitzer Prize for drama and had the longest run of any Wilson play on Broadway, more than 500 performances.

Wilson died of liver cancer in 2005.

Bob Barker helps stop whaling with namesake ship

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Five million dollars for an anti-whaling ship? Bob Barker says the price is right.

Barker donated that amount to the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, which named its new 1,200-ton anti-whaling ship The Bob Barker.

The ship had its first confrontation with whalers on Tuesday when it joined two other Sea Shepherd vessels aiming to stop a Japanese whaling mission near Antarctica.

"Whaling was shut down today," Sea Shepherd founder Paul Watson said via satellite phone from aboard a nearby ship. "There's no whaling now and hopefully no whaling after this."

The Bob Barker is a high-speed former whaling ship that can cut through ice, Watson said, adding that the vessel "makes it a lot easier for us to shut down these whaling operations."

Sea Shepherd, which Watson describes as an "anti-poaching organization," aims to enforce the United Nations World Charter for Nature by physically intervening in illegal whaling missions.

"They're targeting endangered and protected whales," he said.

Barker, a longtime animal activist, stepped up his efforts even more after retiring from his 35-year gig hosting "The Price Is Right." He met Watson through a fellow animal activist and was instantly impressed.

"He said he thought he could put the Japanese whaling fleet out of business if he had $5 million," Barker recalled. "I said, 'I think you do have the skills to do that, and I have $5 million, so let's get it on,' so that's what we did."

Barker, 86, said he was "genuinely proud" to be associated with Sea Shepherd. And while the TV studio where "The Price Is Right" is filmed is officially called the Bob Barker Studio, the veteran broadcaster said he's never had a ship named after him.

"It was our idea to name it the Bob Barker. He's a little too humble for that," Watson said. "I thought it was the least we could do."

O'Neal jailed on probation violation in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Redmond O'Neal, the troubled son of Ryan O'Neal and the late Farrah Fawcett, was back in jail after a judge found he committed a drug-related probation violation. O'Neal, 24, appeared Tuesday at a brief hearing before Superior Court Judge Michael Tynan after being jailed on Dec. 29.

O'Neal

O'Neal was released from jail last year after a series of drug-related arrests and told to attend an intense drug treatment program that would be his last chance to avoid up to six years in state prison.

It was unclear what prompted Tynan to find O'Neal in violation of his probation, but the program required O'Neal to undergo frequent drug testing.

District attorney's spokeswoman Jane Robison said O'Neal gave Tynan a sealed, handwritten letter during Tuesday's hearing.

O'Neal's attorney Richard Pintal declined to discuss its contents, saying Tynan told O'Neal to write the letter as an assignment.

O'Neal will remain in custody until he returns to court on Feb. 2, Robison said.

Ryan O'Neal was not present in court Tuesday.

Redmond O'Neal was in jail during Fawcett's final days. He was briefly released for a last visit and allowed to attend her funeral.

Battery charge dismissed against Gerald Butler

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge has dropped a misdemeanor battery charge against Gerard Butler.

Superior Court spokeswoman Mary Hearn says the charge was dismissed at a hearing Tuesday after the actor completed community service.

Butler could have faced up to six months in jail if convicted. His attorney, Blair Berk, declined to comment.

City prosecutors say the Scottish-born star of "300" had a run-in with a photographer on Oct. 7, 2008 after leaving a premiere party for the film "RocknRolla."

His manager has said Butler was forced to have his driver stop the car after the photographer sped through red lights and almost struck two pedestrians.

City Attorney's spokesman Frank Mateljan (Mah-tel-JAN') says prosecutors are "satisfied" with the outcome.

AP

In this Nov. 17, 2009 file photo, actor Gerard Butler attends an exclusive competition winners screening of his film Law Abiding Citizen, introduced by the actor himself at a Soho Hotel in London.

Smithsonian museums saw jump in visits last year

WASHINGTON (AP)—Visitor counts at the Smithsonian Institution's museums have rebounded to more than 30 million visits in 2009 for the first time since a slump following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

A draft report the museum complex released Tuesday shows visits to the Smithsonian's 18 museums, galleries and the National Zoo increased about 19.4 percent in 2009, up from about 25.15 million visits in 2008.

Much of the increase can be attributed to the National Museum of American History, which reopened in 2008 after an extensive renovation. It drew about 1.4 million more visitors last year compared with its last full year open in 2005.

The National Museum of Natural History saw an increase of about 450,000 to 7.4 million visits, making it the most-visited museum.

Green Day's 'American Idiot' is set for Broadway

NEW YORK (AP)—Get ready for Green Day's "American Idiot" to punk rock on Broadway.

Producers Tom Hulce and Ira Pittelman said Tuesday a stage adaptation of the group's Grammy-winning album will open April 20 at the St. James Theatre. Preview performances begin March 24.

A tale of disaffected suburban youth, the musical features lyrics by Green Day frontman Billie Joe Armstrong and a book by Armstrong and Michael Mayer, who also directed the show. Casting was not announced.

The production had a sold-out run last fall at Berkeley Repertory Theatre in California.

AP

In this May 15, 2009, file photo, Green Day members, from left, Tre Cool, Billie Joe Armstrong and Mike Dirnt pose at the Mercer Hotel in New York.

Mayer, Hulce and Pittelman were all involved in Broadway's last big rock musical, the Tony-winning "Spring Awakening."

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Sharon Stone to guest star on 'Law & Order: SVU'

NEW YORK (AP)—Sharon Stone will soon be fighting crime in a guest role on "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit." The Oscar-nominated actress will appear on the NBC cop drama in a four-episode story arc later this season, says Pam Golum, a spokeswoman for producer Dick Wolf. Stone, best known for her films "Basic Instinct" and "Casino," will play a cop turned prosecutor. In the past, she has guest-starred on the series "Huff" and "The Practice," for which she won an Emmy. Her casting was first reported Tuesday by Entertainment Weekly's Web site.

Teen star Justin Bieber to perform at NY school

LIDO BEACH, N.Y. (AP)—A successful canned food drive has won students at a New York middle school a concert by teen pop sensation Justin Bieber. Officials at Long Beach Middle School in Lido Beach say the 15-year-old Canadian singer will perform at the school sometime in February. They say the Long Island school will be locked down for the student-only concert. The school bested 149 other New York metropolitan area schools in a November food drive by collecting more than 27,000 pounds of food. In November, police shut down an event featuring Bieber signing copies of his debut album, "My World" at a Long Island mall. A crowd of 3,000 young girls and adults began pushing and shoving, sending five people to hospitals with minor injuries.

Abstract artist Kenneth Noland dies at age 85

PORT CLYDE, Maine (AP)—Kenneth Noland, an artist who became prominent in an abstract expressionist style called Color Field painting, has died at his home in coastal Maine. He was 85. His wife, Paige Rense, editor-in-chief of Architectural Digest, confirmed the death through a spokeswoman. Noland died Tuesday from cancer in his home in Port Clyde. Noland, who was born in Asheville, N.C., was a key painter in the style known as color field, which is characterized by large expanses of color either painted, stained or poured on canvas. Michael Komanecky from the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, Maine, says Noland's paintings were marked by "dynamic forms and subtle and sometimes striking interplays of colors."

NBC's Mitchell got most evening news time in 2000s

NEW YORK (AP)—NBC's Andrea Mitchell logged more TV face time than any other network evening news reporter during the past decade. News consultant Andrew Tyndall (TIN'-duhl), who logs each evening newscast, calculated that Mitchell was on NBC's "Nightly News" for 2,416 minutes from 2000 to 2009. The veteran diplomatic correspondent beat her NBC medical correspondent colleague, Robert Bazell (bah-ZEHL'), who had 2,328 minutes. Tyndall says NBC had five of the six most heavily used reporters. The exception was CBS Pentagon reporter David Martin. By far, the story the evening news broadcasts spent the most time on during the past decade was the Iraq War. But the war didn't even make the top 20 of minutes logged during 2009.

Prolific television producer David Gerber dies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—David Gerber, who won Emmy, Golden Globe and Peabody awards for his television shows, has died of heart failure at the University of Southern California Medical Center. He was 86. The announcement was made Tuesday by his publicist, Jeff Sanderson. Gerber won Emmys for the popular TV series "Police Story" and "Police Woman," as well as produced many award-winning television movies. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Gerber served as a radio gunner in World War II. His B-17 was shot down over Germany and he became a prisoner of war. Gerber's hobby was his 100-acre vineyard in Northern Califirnia, where he produced his brand of Laraine wines, a tribute to his wife and sole survivor, actress Laraine Stephens.

Wide variety of cultures use many ways to count the days

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I enjoyed the column you published Nov. 26 with letters from readers about 13-13-13, and I'm not the least astonished that many of them didn't get the humor.

You failed to point out that several calendars actually DO have 13 months, among them the Muslim and Chinese calendars, each of which are lunar-solar calendars. Thus, 13-13-13 could be possible. My personal preference would be for 12 months of 30 days with a midsummer two-day break and a midwinter two- or three-day break. It may not be practical, but it would be fun.

JOHN S., CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO.

DEAR JOHN: Thank you for the "timely" information and moral support. I confess that when I wrote my reply to the original letter, which appeared Sept. 4, it did not occur to me to check any calendar other than the one on my desk. Read on:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Your 13th month column was hilarious. It made people think. However, Orthodox Jews must be writing you by the thousands over your 13-13-13 "mistake." The ancient Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar in which a 13th month occurs every few years. Even secularists can count 13 new moons every 365-day year. This is why new moons are never at the same time of the "month," and why Jewish holidays never fall on the same day of the week.

RICHARD IN PALM DESERT, CALIF.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: There have been many calendars adopted throughout the ages as a way of measuring time, whether using the Gregorian currently used by Western civilization or by the lunar or solar means. Among them: the Mayan, Aztec, Babylonian, Zoroastrian, Hopi, Hindu, Egyptian, Roman and the Baha'i. Let us all celebrate in diverse and creative ways with love, compassion and encouragement.

CAROL IN POST FALLS, IDAHO

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I was glad to see you embrace the intelligent idea that we will return to using the 13-month calendar by the year 2013. The insanity promoted by the ego-driven Gregorian calendar contributes much to the materialistic consumerism madness that pollutes our world.

Until we return our focus to the organic, cyclical nature of time we will not truly begin the healing of Mother Gaia to the extent we are able. Bringing mankind's consciousness back to a natural order of time will do much to heal the insanity that causes us to think we are superior to nature and the natural order of all things.

A.J. IN YREKA, CALIF.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'll bet most of your readers would be surprised to learn that there are some places in the world that DO have 13 months. Ethiopia's tourism motto is: "13 Months of Sunshine." Each month has 30 days, leaving five days (six during leap year) for the 13th month of Pagome. Their calendar is also about seven years behind ours. So, while you still can't celebrate 13-13-13—even in Ethiopia—you CAN claim to be seven years younger.

ETHIOPIAN AT HEART, ST. JOSEPH, MICH.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Thought you might be interested to know that George Eastman, founder of Kodak, established a company-wide calendar based on 13 months, each with four weeks -- plus a New Year's Day. So in 1913, there WAS a 13-13-13. And if it had been on a Friday, then every month of that year would have had a Friday the 13th, too.

LEONARD M., ROCHESTER, N.Y.

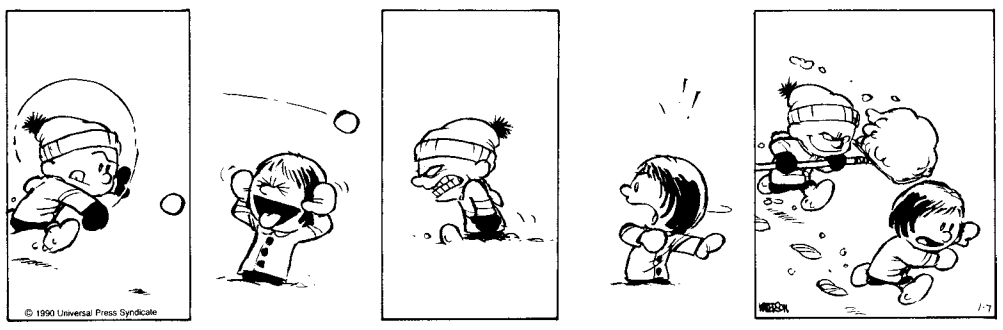
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby—Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

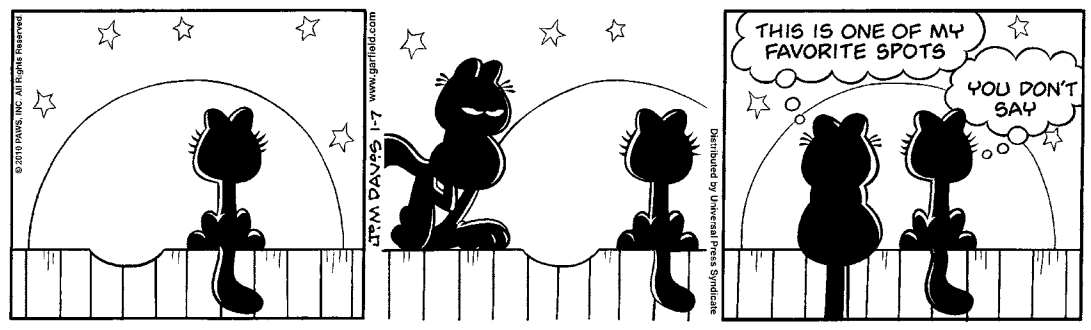
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis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JIM DAVIS 1-7 www.garfield.com
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THIS IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE SPOTS
YOU DON'T SAY

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

DO YOU WANT TO KEEP THIS FLOWERY TOWEL CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM AUNT LYNDA?
THAT'S NOT A TOWEL. IT'S A REALLY THICK SCARF.
HONEY, IT'S SO GARISH.
GARISH? REALLY? IT LOOKED FRENCH TO ME.
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The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I'M WRITING IN MY DIARY. HOW MANY "G"s ARE IN BUNGEE JUMP?
YOU'VE NEVER BUNGEE JUMPED!
YEAH. I TRY TO JAZZ MY LIFE UP A LITTLE IN CASE SOMEONE READS IT.
WOW! IT'S A SHAME YOUR LIFE IS THAT PATHETIC!
I KNOW. IN MY DIARY MY DOG IS A GREAT DANE.
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

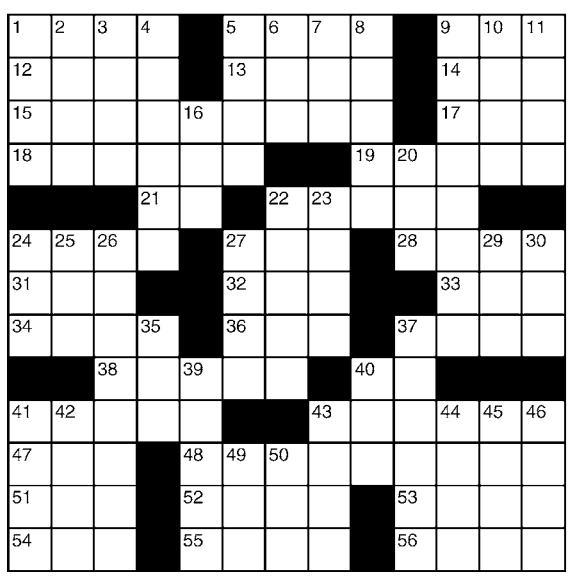
ACROSS
1 Not barefoot
5 Let off some steam
9 Debtor's letters
12 Art-class model, often
13 Early pulpit
14 Springtime mo.
15 Classic sitcom
17 Face
18 End of a sentence?
19 Obliterate
21 With 40-Across, in which case
22 Milk dispenser?
24 Eager
27 "CSI" evidence
28 Nitwit
31 Bing's pal
32 Sternward
33 Army rank (Abbr.)
34 Skelton's Kadiddlehopper
36 Conk out
37 Read cursorily
38 Minimum
40 See 21-Across
41 Pandora set them free
43 Provoke
47 Last letter
48 Theme song of vaudeville's Eva Tanguay
51 Gun the engine
52 Catastrophic
53 Differently
54 Mimic
55 Foil's cousin
56 Harvest

DOWN
1 Quick cut
2 Island dance
3 Stench
4 Lacking, with "of"
5 Low land
6 Ostrich's cousin
7 Leno's network
8 Monkeyed (with)
9 Simon and Garfunkel song
10 Piece of work
11 Egg on
16 Sprite
20 Scarlet
22 Ill-suited
23 Social engagement
24 Easy as —
25 Abbr. on a book's spine
26 Inspirational song of 1953
27 June honorees
29 Luau bowlful
30 Shade source
35 Gibson or Brooks
37 Association football
39 Remark to the audience
40 Perch
41 Pound of poetry
42 Second in command, maybe
43 Dandling locale
44 Hardy cabbage
45 — Minor
46 Chick's comment
49 Pickpocket
50 Galena or cinnabar

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	S	A	P	■	E	G	G	■	A	L	O	T
N	U	D	E	■	N	E	O	■	N	O	G	O
T	E	A	R	I	N	T	O	■	T	O	R	N
S	T	R	I	D	E	■	D	R	A	K	E	S
■	■	■	L	E	A	■	S	A	R	I	■	■
A	R	C	■	A	D	S	■	T	E	N	O	R
B	O	O	B	■	S	A	G	■	S	T	A	Y
A	M	M	A	N	■	D	E	W	■	O	R	E
■	■	E	L	I	Z	■	N	A	B	■	■	■
G	R	I	L	L	E	■	O	R	E	G	O	N
M	O	N	O	■	B	U	M	P	I	N	T	O
A	L	T	O	■	R	A	E	■	G	A	T	O
N	E	O	N	■	A	R	S	■	E	W	O	K

Yesterday's answer 1-7



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: David Yost, 41; Nicolas Cage, 46; Katie Couric, 53; Kenny Loggins, 62

Happy Birthday: You may want to make changes but your instincts will tell you to sit still a while longer. This is a great year to go over your plans, discuss options and do research with those who depend on you. You need everyone on board if you are going to make drastic alterations to your lifestyle in a couple of years. Prepare now. Your numbers are 4, 10, 16, 24, 31, 27, 43

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Associate with people who are already moving in the same direction as you. Your intuition should be telling you what's best but, if you don't follow it, you are likely to give in to someone trying to take advantage of you. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Letting your emotions take over will lead to trouble. You have to say no to anyone depending on you unrealistically or taking advantage of your kindness or generosity. A trip or social activity will do you good. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Rely on your versatility, knowledge and experience to get ahead and make the right choices. Don't spend on anything or anyone that will not bring you a profit in the future. Be smart with your money and any deals you plan to negotiate. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You'll be plagued with requests that are not easy to honor. You have to be a little standoffish if you want to avoid constant pressure. Burdens, demands and greater responsibility will hold you back—hand them to someone else. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): A real estate deal or making changes that will make your life simpler should be in the works. Avoid any trouble with peers or colleagues. Protect your assets and avoid taking on someone else's liabilities. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Follow your own path and make the most of what you have and what you can do. As long as you call the shots, you will have no regrets. A get-together will lead to an interesting pastime and a new friendship. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): It's all in the way you handle others. Don't make waves at home or with loved ones. Concentrate on touching base with people who share your interests. Your uniqueness will attract positive attention. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Someone will be all too happy to run with your ideas and make a profit at your expense. Anxiety will hold you back but fact-finding and research will keep you in the game and give you greater potential to get ahead. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't worry about the popular vote—you only have to impress the person who makes the decisions. Old habits die hard, so use whatever discipline you can to get rid of whatever is holding you back. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't give in under pressure. If someone wants you to do something or to give up something, say no. Don't let your emotions get the better of you. Be strong. Don't travel about; let others come to you. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): The things you need to do in order to get caught up must be organized and put behind you. An emotional matter may cost you if you don't handle it correctly. Don't let a secret matter cause you grief. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Taking on a burden that doesn't belong to you is senseless and will cause problems with someone you care for. Deal with what's being asked of you so that you can fully enjoy the company of someone you feel will play an important role in your future. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are strong-willed and intelligent, articulate and determined. You are true to your beliefs, customs and traditions.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

9					4			2
	5			6			1	
		7	1			3		
2						7		
	3						6	
		8						3
		2			5	1		
	1			9			5	
4			2					6

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/07

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	8	1	5	9	4	3	2	7
7	4	9	1	2	3	5	6	8
3	2	5	7	6	8	9	4	1
8	6	2	3	4	1	7	9	5
9	5	4	6	8	7	2	1	3
1	3	7	2	5	9	4	8	6
5	9	8	4	3	6	1	7	2
2	7	6	9	1	5	8	3	4
4	1	3	8	7	2	6	5	9

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/06

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PINK ELEPHANTS **Solution: 9 letters**

E	Y	E	S	E	G	A	M	I	B	R	A	I	N	P
D	M	Y	C	E	H	P	O	R	P	E	N	F	S	E
A	I	E	I	R	E	V	E	R	I	S	E	Y	T	R
R	N	L	R	E	T	C	A	R	A	H	C	R	S	S
A	D	R	A	E	H	N	C	N	S	H	A	H	S	O
P	P	U	U	C	K	D	E	S	O	P	A	U	K	N
N	T	(P)	M	S	I	M	E	L	Y	M	O	M	C	A
O	S	(L)	A	B	H	M	O	L	G	L	I	O	I	L
I	S	(A)	N	R	O	G	O	T	U	N	L	R	R	I
T	E	(Y)	I	O	I	O	F	C	P	S	I	I	T	T
P	N	N	C	C	F	T	I	A	D	M	I	E	S	Y
E	D	M	A	E	R	D	I	A	L	R	Y	O	E	S
C	A	L	U	D	I	C	R	O	U	S	I	S	N	S
E	M	U	I	R	I	L	E	D	N	L	E	E	I	I
D	A	N	C	I	N	G	N	O	I	S	I	V	W	M

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Apparitions, Beer, Brain, Character, Comical, Dancing, Deception, Delirium, Delusion, Dream, Dumbo, Eyes, False, Fool, Hear, Humor, Images, Insane, Ludicrous, Madness, Manic, Mess, Mind, Miss, Parade, Personality, Play, Pranks, Prophecy, Psychological, Reverie, Ridiculous, Rush, Seeing, Sham, Silly, Symptom, Trap, Tricks, Vision, Weird, Wine,

Yesterday's Answer: Furry

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WHATZIT Solution: Don Quixote

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Saipan Tribune

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Open Date: Wednesday, December 23, 2009 **Close Date:** Friday, January 8, 2010

JVA No. 10-005

Position: Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations Supervisor (Saipan)

Salary: Negotiable **Contract:** Two-year term

For more information about the position(s) being advertised, please stop by the Human Resources Office on the third floor of the Joeten Dandan Building.

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WORLD RESORT

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

OPEN DATE: January 7, 2010 **CLOSE DATE: January 12, 2010**

POSITION: Lifeguard/Prim (8/positions) **SALARY- $4.55/hour**

REQUIREMENTS:

- High School Diploma
- Police Clearance
- Color Photo - ID or Passport Size

JOB QUALIFICATION:

- Must be a high school graduate.
- Must posses a current lifeguard certificate. (i.e. ARC/YMC/Ellis & Associates/USLA/Hawaii State Lifeguard/ Canadian Lifeguard/Australian Lifeguard).
- Hospitality and customer service experience preferred.
- Multilingual skills a plus (i.e. Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Chinese).

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Guest Interaction
- Activities & Promotion
- Entertainment
- Participates in all department training, staff meetings, and activities
- Maintenance and Typhoon Preparation
- Media & Special Group Functions

For more information you may contact Ms. Miriam K. Seman, Ex. Manager for Human Resources Department at (670) 234-5900 ext. 274

Employment application forms are available at the Saipan World Resort, Security Office located next to Wave Jungle Water Park. Applicants must include all necessary requirements and submitted to the Security Office.

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

DONKEY OT

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Find today's solution in this section

Randy Johnson retires after 22 seasons

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Randy Johnson looked so awkward on the mound early in his career, that shaggy hair dangling down his neck as he fired a blazing fastball in every direction but the strike zone.

Now, after 22 major league seasons, The Big Unit is walking away from baseball as one of the game's greatest pitchers.

The 6-foot-10 Johnson announced his retirement on a conference call Tuesday, a decision that had been expected from the overpowering left-hander who reached 300 wins last June.

"I really wanted to go out on my terms," Johnson said. "I just feel like there's not a lot more for me to do in this game. I just think it's a natural progression when you play this long. Eventually you have to say it's time."

A five-time Cy Young Award winner, the 46-year-old Johnson accomplished just about everything in his remarkable career that a player hopes for in baseball.

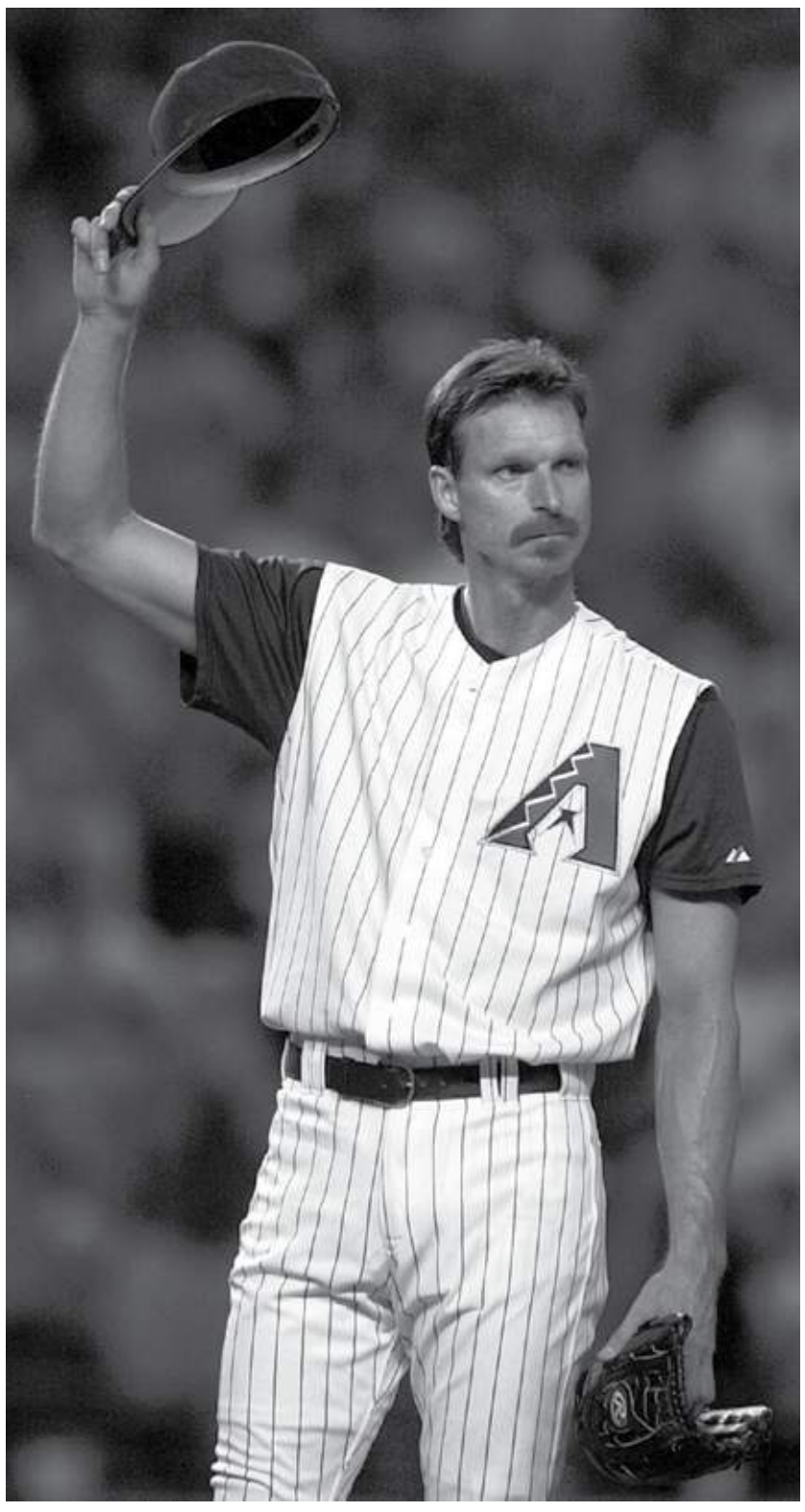
He owns a World Series ring and co-MVP honors, and was a 10-time All-Star. He threw two no-hitters, including a perfect game, and ranks second on the career strikeout list.

Johnson finishes with a record of 303-166 and 4,875 strikeouts in 4,135 1-3 innings for Montreal, Seattle, Houston, Arizona, the New York Yankees and San Francisco. His strikeouts are the most by a left-hander and second to Nolan Ryan's 5,714.

"It's all been a bit of a whirlwind. I never really got caught up in what I did," Johnson said. "I never really dwelled on my achievements. They're nice. Maybe now I'll be able to reflect on them."

Johnson overcame several injuries to keep pitching effectively into his mid-40s. He said before last season ended that he looked forward to going home to Arizona and spending time with his family before making a decision about his future.

"It's taken this long into January because I definitely wanted to just kind of relax from the season being over and make sure I had a clear head when I made this decision, and that I would be making it wholeheartedly and would be sticking to it," he said.



AP

In this Sept. 15, 2004, file photo, Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Randy Johnson acknowledges a standing ovation from the crowd after striking out Colorado Rockies batter Vinny Castilla to pass Steve Carlton for third place on the all-time strikeout list during the seventh inning of a baseball game in Phoenix.

Johnson went 8-6 with a 4.88 ERA in 17 starts and five relief appearances for San Francisco last season despite missing more than two months with a strained left shoulder that also had a tear in the rotator cuff. He returned in late September as a reliever, a role he couldn't see himself embracing in order to keep pitching.

His final strikeout came on the season's final day at San Diego, against Adrian Gonzalez to end the seventh inning. Johnson said he developed a better appreciation for relief pitchers last year.

"My 40s have really been learning years," he said. "The last five years of my career, there's been a lot there to sift through, a lot of ups and downs, some great moments in my career and some moments that got my head scratching."

Johnson came out of a game July 5 against Houston with an injury, the first serious shoulder problem of his career. He felt something in his arm on a swing during that start but initially tried to pitch through it. He left the game after committing a throwing error in the fourth inning.

He was on the disabled list from July 6 to Sept. 16, marking the 10th DL stint of Johnson's career. He had four knee operations and three back surgeries, but worked his way back each time.

"This isn't a tall man's sport—basketball is," Johnson said.

But by the time he was done, he had a Hall of Fame resume.

Johnson signed with his hometown Giants before last season to try to help them reach the playoffs. They stayed in the NL wild-card chase well into September but missed the postseason for a sixth straight year.

Pitching in San Francisco, Johnson was only about 40 miles west of where he grew up in Livermore.

"The entire San Francisco Giants organization would like to salute Randy Johnson on a brilliant Hall of Fame career and congratulate him on his retirement," the team said in a statement. "He has been a tremendous champion of this great game, escalating to heights that few have reached. He will go down as one of the greatest pitchers in the history of the game."

Johnson largely stayed to himself in his final season, insisting the 300-win milestone wasn't his top priority. Then on June 4 at Washington, he became the 24th pitcher in big league history to accomplish the feat.

Johnson pitched his first no-hitter in 1990, won 19 games with 308 strikeouts in 1993 and led the Mariners to their first playoff berth with an 18-2 record in 1995. He finished his 10-year stint in Seattle with a 130-74 record before being traded to Houston in 1998.

He signed as a free agent with the Diamondbacks before the following season, beginning one of the most dominating runs a pitcher has ever had. Johnson won the Cy Young in each of his first four seasons with Arizona, capturing the coveted pitcher's triple crown in 2002 with a 24-5 record, 2.32 ERA and 334 strikeouts.

His most memorable moments—and some he's most proud of - were in 2001, when he came out of the bullpen to beat the Yankees in Game 7 of the World Series to give the Diamondbacks the title. He went 3-0 in the Series, sharing the MVP award with Curt Schilling.

At age 40, Johnson pitched a perfect game against Atlanta.

He didn't have as much success after leaving Arizona for the first time following the 2004 season. He won 34 games in two seasons with the Yankees, although the tenure was marred by a run-in with a camera man and postseason struggles.

He returned to Arizona in '07 and won 15 games in two years while struggling with back problems.

"I never thought I was going to play this long. I'm blessed that I did," he said, adding that he plans to coach someday.

Johnson has a one-year service agreement to work in some capacity for the Diamondbacks.

Source: Holliday, Cards agree to $120M deal

ST. LOUIS (AP)—The St. Louis Cardinals persuaded another star player to stick around. This time it was really expensive and took a little longer than anticipated.

Matt Holliday agreed Tuesday to a $120 million, seven-year contract that is baseball's richest deal of the offseason and the biggest in franchise history. Just like Mark McGwire, Jim Edmonds and Scott Rolen before him, the power-hitting outfielder arrived in a trade and decided St. Louis was the best place for him.

The Cardinals announced Tuesday they had agreed with Holliday on a multiyear contract subject to a physical. General manager John Mozeliak said in a text message to The Associated Press that he planned to address the media Thursday once Holliday passes the physical.

His agreement includes $119 million guaranteed over seven seasons plus a $17 million vesting option for 2017 with a $1 million buyout, a person familiar with the deal told the AP. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the team didn't reveal the length of the contract or financial details.

Holliday, who had been the biggest prize in free agency this winter, confirmed he was returning in an interview on ESPN Radio.

"I'm going back to the Cardinals," he said. "I'm excited about it."

St. Louis acquired Holliday from Oakland in July and he helped lead the Cardinals to their first NL Central title since 2006. They sent several top prospects to the Athletics and justified that expense by retaining a player who hit .353 with 13 homers and 55 RBIs in 63 games for St. Louis, which took control of the division race with a 32-11 record after the trade.

"I felt like I wanted to kind of see what's out there and kind of look around and maybe see what other teams are all about," said Holliday, an Oklahoma native. "At the end of the day, playing in St. Louis and playing with the guys I made friends with became something that was very appealing to me."

A three-time All-Star, Holliday was a perfect fit batting cleanup behind star slugger Albert Pujols, though he was the goat in a first-round playoff sweep by the Los Angeles Dodgers after dropping a sinking liner to left field that would have been the final out of Game 2.

Holliday, who turns 30 on Jan. 15, batted .313 overall with 24 homers and 109 RBIs, his fifth .300 season and third 100-RBI year.

"Obviously, with Albert Pujols on the team you have a great opportunity to have a great team," Holliday told ESPN. "Albert is the best player in the history of baseball in my mind. Hopefully between the two of us we can help do our part to win a World Series."

Cardinals pitcher Kyle Lohse said he got the news in text messages between the teammates' wives. Holliday and Lohse have the same agent, Scott Boras.

"That's pretty good, pretty exciting," Lohse told the AP in a telephone interview. "I've been around long enough not to pay too much attention until something gets done, but I know he liked it here and I'm sure he's really happy things worked out."

Holliday's agreement is much bigger than the other two big free-agent deals of the offseason: pitcher John Lackey's $82.5 million, five-year contract with Boston and outfielder Jason Bay's $66 million, four-year contract with the New York Mets, which was finalized earlier Tuesday.

"When you're a little kid growing up hoping to be a professional baseball player and hoping to play in the major leagues, I don't think you ever think about the money," Holliday said. "Now that you look at it, it's a little overwhelming."

Holliday's contract contains a full no-trade clause and deferred money that lowers its annual present-day value to about $16 million.

It also likely sets a floor for negotiations between the Cardinals and Pujols, who is entering the final guaranteed season of a $100 million, seven-year contract. St. Louis holds a $16 million option for 2011 on the three-time NL MVP.

St. Louis becomes only the third team with a pair of $100 million players, joining the New York Yankees (Alex Rodriguez, Derek Jeter, Mark Teixeira and CC Sabathia) and the New York Mets (Johan Santana and Carlos Beltran).

The Cardinals have long considered themselves a mid-market franchise and had a payroll under $100 million last season, but this deal might be a signal the franchise is willing to spend more. The Cardinals have three players making over $10 million per season, including NL Cy Young Award runner-up Chris Carpenter ($13 million).

Holliday said he was happy to have things settled after negotiations that went on for months.

"This has been a bit of a long process and there were some emotional ups and downs that go with it," he said. "It hasn't exactly been a walk in the park. It's relief."

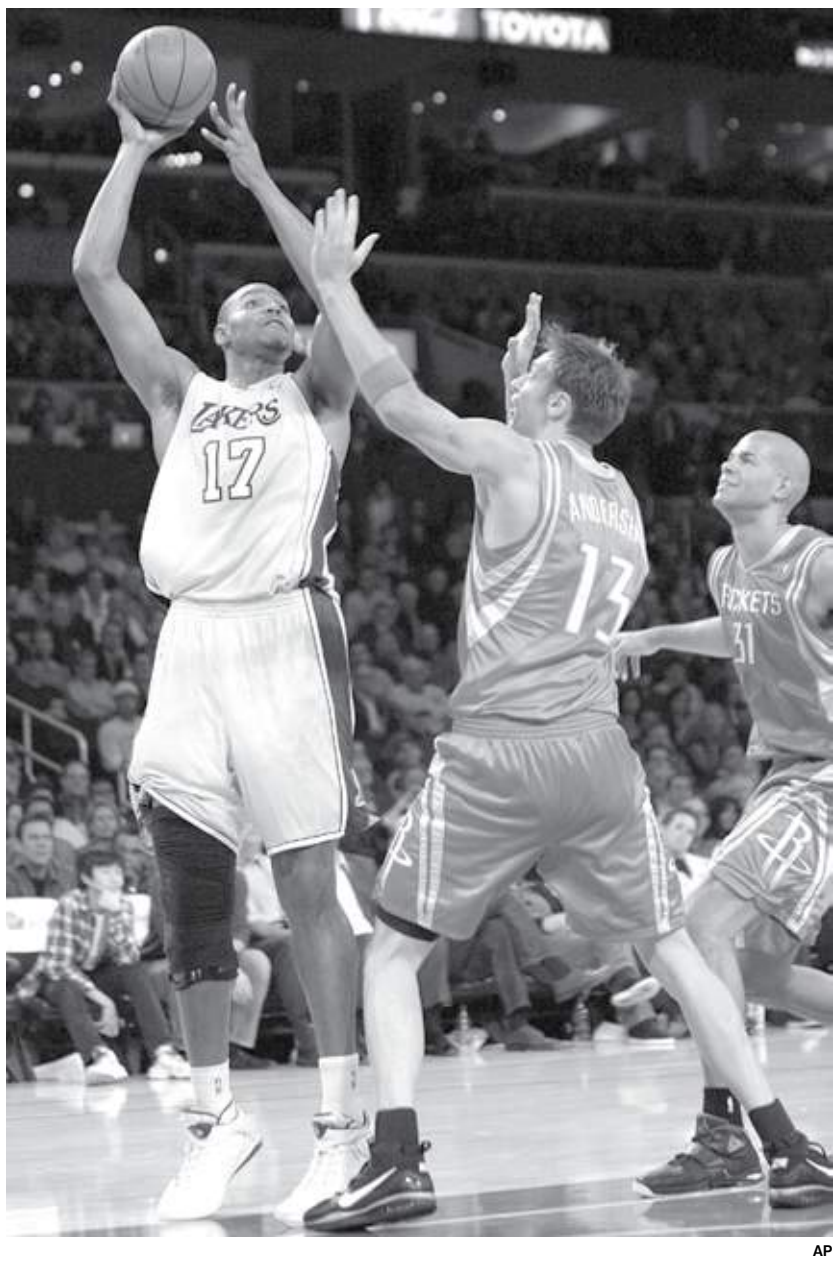
Lakers fight back to defeat Rockets

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Andrew Bynum scored 11 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter as the Los Angeles Lakers fought back to beat the Houston Rockets 88-79 on Tuesday, notching their fourth consecutive NBA victory.

Kobe Bryant added 22 points, but had just three field goals in the second half when he picked up four fouls.

The Lakers maintained a 4-1/2 game lead in the Western Conference and a two-game lead over Boston and Cleveland for the league's best record.

Carl Landry led the Rockets with 19 points.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers center Andrew Bynum (17) takes a shot defended by Houston Rockets center David Andersen (13) of Australia and Houston Rockets guard Shane Battier (31) in the second half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2010.

Grizzlies 109, Trail Blazers 105

In Portland, Oregon, Memphis closed with a 13-1 run over the final four minutes to beat Portland.

O.J. Mayo scored 27 points, hitting 10 of 18 shots including four 3-pointers, as Memphis moved above .500 for the first time this season.

Zach Randolph also scored 27 points and had a game-high 14 rebounds for the Grizzlies, who have won four consecutive games.

Brandon Roy hit 9 of 18 shots and scored 27 points to lead Portland.

Suns 113, Kings 109

In Sacramento, California, Phoenix snapped a seven-game road losing skid with a tight win over Sacramento.

Steve Nash had 30 points and 12 assists, and Amare Stoudemire scored 24 for the Suns.

The Kings erased an entire 20-point first half deficit but could never take the lead, falling for the 14th time in the past 16 meetings between the teams.

Tyreke Evans led Sacramento with 27 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists.

Pacers 97, Magic 90

In Indianapolis, Roy Hibbert scored a career-high 26 points, leading Indiana over Orlando.

Hibbert, a 2.13-meter (7-2) center, added eight rebounds and four blocks. Luther Head had 18 points for the Pacers.

Mickael Pietrus and Jameer Nelson each scored 16 for the Magic, who still lead the Southeast Division despite consecutive losses.

Mavericks 98, Pistons 93

In Dallas, the hosts overcame a slow start to hand Detroit its 10th consecutive loss.

Jason Terry scored 26 points and Dirk Nowitzki added 22 for the Mavericks, who recovered after shooting just 29 percent in the first quarter and trailing by 14 points during the first half.

The Pistons hadn't dropped 10 in a row since the end of the 1993-94 season. They lost their final 13 games that season.

Richard Hamilton led Detroit with 20 points.

Nuggets 123, Warriors 122

In Denver, J.R. Smith hit two free throws with 0.4 seconds remaining to lift Denver over Golden State.

Smith, one of four Nuggets to finish with at least 20 points, was fouled by Monta Ellis while throwing up a desperation 3-pointer after taking an inbounds pass with just 3 seconds remaining.

Ellis had given Golden State a 122-121 lead when he made a 10-foot turnaround jumper with 15 seconds to play.

Corey Maggette scored a season-high 35 points to lead the Warriors, who lost their eighth straight on the road.

Bobcats 113, Bulls 108

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Charlotte held off a fast-finishing Chicago to notch a third straight victory.

Gerald Wallace scored 32 points, and Stephen Jackson and Flip Murray added 25 each for the Bobcats, in a fast-paced game that saw both teams shoot 51 percent.

Derrick Rose and John Salmons missed potential game-tying 3-point attempts in the closing seconds for the Bulls, who gave up seventh place in the Eastern Conference to the Bobcats despite wiping out a 13-point second-quarter deficit.

Rose scored 10 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter.

Wizards 104, 76ers 97

In Philadelphia, Washington overcame an 18-point deficit to defeat Philadelphia.

Antawn Jamison tied his season-high with 32 points and had 14 rebounds, and Nick Young scored 21 points for the Wizards, who snapped a four-game losing streak.

Andre Iguodala scored 20 points to lead the Sixers.

Bucks 98, Nets 76

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Milwaukee got a rare road win with a comfortable victory over hapless New Jersey.

Andrew Bogut scored 14 of his 18 points in the second half, while Carlos Delfino — who had scored just 10 points in the Bucks' past five games — added 17.

Yi Jianlian had 22 points to lead the Nets, who lost for the 31st time in 34 games this season.

NBA BRIEFS

Cavs' Moon to miss three weeks

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio (AP)—Cleveland's Jamario Moon is expected to miss at least three weeks with a left abdominal strain. Moon, signed as a free agent last summer from Miami, is averaging 5 points and 3.5 rebounds as a reserve for the Cavaliers. Coach Mike Brown said Moon could likely play through the injury, but the team is being cautious. Brown wouldn't even let Moon shoot free throws at the end of Tuesday's practice. "We'll shut him completely down for about 10 days and then re-evaluate it," Brown said. "He probably could play, he definitely could shoot. We just don't want it to flare up during the latter part of the season." The latest injury is unrelated to the right abdominal strain Moon suffered earlier this season, the team said. Moon's injury could mean more playing time for Daniel Gibson, who has been in and out of the rotation this season. Cleveland (27-9) hosts Washington (10-21) on Wednesday.

Jazz pick up D-League guard

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—The Utah Jazz are filling out their roster with a point guard from the NBA Development League's Idaho Stampede. Sundiata (sun-DEE-ah-tah) Gaines is getting a 10-day contract with Utah, which has been one below the NBA minimum with 12 players since a trade last month. Jazz general manager Kevin O'Connor says as long as Gaines passes a physical Wednesday, he will be added to the lineup. Gaines played four years at Georgia and spent last season playing in Italy after going undrafted in 2008. He has averaged 24 points and almost five rebounds with Idaho this season. The Jazz may need him right away. Starter Deron Williams is listed as a game-time decision for Wednesday's game against Memphis with a sprained and bruised right wrist.

Source: Shanahan agrees to coach Redskins

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mike Shanahan agreed Tuesday to become the coach of the Washington Redskins, the latest step in a major overhaul of a troubled franchise.

Shanahan's decision to join the team was confirmed to The Associated Press by an official within the NFL. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the team was not commenting on its coaching search.

The Redskins announced they would hold a news conference Wednesday, although they did not say why.

The deal with Shanahan is for five years, the Denver Post reported on its Web site. The hire comes less than 48 hours after the Redskins fired Jim Zorn—and less than three weeks after front-office chief Vinny Cerrato resigned and quickly was replaced by general manager Bruce Allen.

All of which means that, within a month, the Redskins have gone from an organization that revolved primarily around owner Dan Snyder and yesman Cerrato to one that includes two powerful decision-makers who are sure to wield much clout.

Allen—son of Hall of Famer and former Redskins coach George Allen—became the first person to hold the title of GM in Snyder's decade-plus of ownership, while Shanahan is known to demand a heavy say-so in personnel decisions.

Shanahan will have the final authority on football decisions, according to ESPN.com.

All in all, it was quite a contrast to Washington's previous transition, when Joe Gibbs abruptly left as coach and team president after the 2007 season. The Redskins went through a whole slew of coaching candidates during a month-plus search, and wound up turning to Zorn after others showed no interest, dropped out or were deemed unsatisfactory. Zorn initially was brought aboard as a first-time offensive coordinator, then was promoted to head coach two weeks later.

No such suspense or drama this time.

"You always wonder what's going to be happen. You don't want to be on pins and needles," defensive end Andre Carter said. "When we had the team meeting with Bruce Allen, he told us something would happen hastily. He wasn't joking when he said that."

The Redskins are 82-99 since Snyder bought the team, missing the playoffs in eight of 11 seasons, and the toll of below-.500 seasons and accompanying fan unrest left him little choice but to hire established names and put them in charge.

Shanahan will be Washington's seventh coach since Snyder bought the team in 1999—a stretch that has included only two playoff victories for a team that proudly displays three shiny Super Bowl championship trophies in the lobby of its practice facility.

Shanahan won two Super Bowls in 14 seasons with the Denver Broncos, but was fired a year ago after they missed the playoffs for the third straight season.

Before word of Shanahan's agreement with Washington emerged, Clinton Portis—who played for the coach for two seasons in Denver—described him as "the perfect guy for the job" and a "straight shooter."

"If you're doing the stuff you're supposed to be doing, you're fine with him," Portis said during his weekly radio appearance on ESPN980. "If you're not, no matter how much you're getting paid, he's going to get you up out of there."

Shanahan made the playoffs in half of his seasons in Denver, and had only two losing campaigns—6-10 in 1999 and 7-9 in 2007. His greatest successes came early, earning consecutive NFL titles after the 1997 and 1998 seasons with a team led by quarterback John Elway and running back Terrell Davis.

Shanahan's career regular-season record is 146-98, including 138-86 with the Broncos from 1995-2008, and 8-12 with the Los Angeles Raiders in 1988-89. Shanahan's playoff record is 8-5.

Zorn went 12-20 over two seasons, but he lost 18 of his last 24 games after a 6-2 start in 2008. The Redskins struggled despite a weak early schedule this season and finished 4-12, their worst record since 1994.

Some Redskins players spoke Monday—the day Zorn was let go with a year left on his contract—about a lack of discipline this season and preferential treatment given to some players. Running back Clinton Portis and quarterback Jason Campbell also took shots at each other through the media Tuesday.

White

NMASA to elect 2010 board today

Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will elect its board of directors during its monthly meeting today beginning at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

NMASA president Michael White said the meeting will start promptly at 7pm and will immediately move on to the business of electing the board of directors of the islands' sports governing body.

White also reminded members association to pay their membership dues for 2010, as the payment will be a prerequisite for them to vote.

"If you have not already paid your dues for 2010, please bring your payment to the meeting. Your federation must be paid up in order to vote. Dues are $150 if paid this month; after that, there is a $50 late fee," he said.

Like in previous monthly meetings, NMASA will also vote for the best athletes for last month (December) in four categories (male, female, male student, and female student).

White also reminded associations that will be nominating their athletes to submit written nominations in multiple copies to be distributed to members during the meeting.

Also expected to be tackled in today's meeting is the CNMI's participation in the 2010 Micronesian Games in Palau.

The Games are scheduled from Aug. 1 to 10, 2010 and aside from the CNMI, other Micronesian island-nations expected to participate in the seventh staging of the quadrennial meet are Guam, Yap, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Chuuk, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands.

They will compete in 15 disciplines, namely baseball, lawn tennis, swimming, triathlon, athletics, basketball, Micro All-Around, outrigger canoe, spear-fishing, fast-pitch softball, table tennis, weightlifting, beach volleyball, indoor volleyball, and wrestling. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

MINOR

From Page 28

CNMI bet to the consolation draw.

In the loser's bracket, Minor won her first match, sweeping Emma Thompson in two sets, 6-2, 6-1. The victory was sort of revenge for Minor, who teamed up with Victoria Toole and bowed to siblings Emma and Eloise Thompson in the girls' 14-and-under doubles.

The CNMI netter's next foe was Caitlyn Illangasinghe and the former posted a similar straight sets triumph, 6-1, 6-3, to advance to the Round of 16. Minor was then paired against a much tougher opponent in tournament No. 6 seed Celine Bodera and prevailed again, 8-7, to set up an all-Pacific Oceania quarterfinal duel against Puluspene.

Minor's teammate, Tarani Kamoe of Fiji survived the main draw and made it all the way to the finals before losing to No. 2 seed Brittney Macrostie of Tanzania in three sets, 4-6, 6-2, 4-6.

Joining Minor, Kamoe, and Puluspene on the Pacific Oceania team were Guam's Katie Lai and Fiji's Annie Shannon. Lai gained a slot to the Round of 16 in the main draw, but bowed to Macrostie. Shannon also marched to the Round of 16, but fell to Curtis-McDonald.

The Pacific Oceania netters' next destination will be Albury, New South Wales, which will host the 2009 Post Margaret Court Cup starting today until Jan. 12. From New South Wales, Minor and company will return to Victoria for the 2010 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships that will be held in Wodonga from Jan. 13 to 17.

The visitors will conclude their Land Down Under trip in Melbourne to watch preliminary matches in the 2010 Australian Open for two days.

DCCA

From Page 28

were allowed to play in the double-elimination playoffs and since Bank of Guam and DCCA were tied for eighth to ninth place with their identical 4-7 records, organizers decided to hold a wild-card elimination.

Making it to the wild-card round were DCCA, Commonwealth Health Center, Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighters, and Customs. DCCA crushed ARFF, 96-72, in the first wild card game, while CHC prevailed over Customs, 85-50. DCCA and CHC collided for the right to face Bank of Guam for the last playoffs berth. DCCA won again against CHC, 85-79, and then topped Bank of Guam, 85-81, to catch the last trip to the playoffs.

Since DCCA was the last team to make it to the playoffs, it was pitted against pennant champion Hyatt. Rangamar and company recorded the first upset in the playoffs when it stunned Hyatt, 77-68, at the start of the double-elimination affair.

Next up for DCCA was Public School System and Rangamar and his veteran teammates outclassed the McGraw-Hill-backed squad, 77-71, to march to the winner's bracket semifinals.

In the semifinals, DCCA collided with 2008 champion IT&E and the former kept its winning ways in the playoffs with an 82-72 win to notch the first finals seat. Three teams, Docomo, IT&E, and Hyatt fought in a series of playoff games for the second and last finals slot, while DCCA waited for its finals foe. Docomo eventually won the last finals berth to set up a title duel with DCCA.

Since DCCA was undefeated in the playoffs, it earned a twice-to-beat advantage. In Game 1, DCCA showed its eagerness to end the collision early when it controlled the first half. Docomo mounted a comeback in the second half several times, but DCCA's wiser and much experienced players were steady in the clutch.

In all their victories in the playoffs, Rangamar said their slow-tempo game was a big factor. He said they played with a depleted lineup and it will be futile to run the floor and lose steam in the end against much younger and faster teams.

"If you have noticed, every time I call a timeout after seeing the opposing team picking up the pace of the game, I always tell our players to slow down. We have to be patient, move the ball around, and make a shot only going into the last 10 seconds of the 24-second shot clock," Rangamar said.

DCCA's halfcourt set favored Peter Camacho and Romeo Iginoef, who were consistent with their inside game all throughout the playoffs. Camacho, who scored 33 points in the finals, was almost unstoppable in the shaded lane and was also reliable on short jumpers. Iginoef was a force in the rebound department and a master of acrobatic shots inside.

When things went wrong in the paint, Taj Van Buren and Rangamar were there to try their luck outside, while Ponce Rasa gave DCCA points on fastbreaks. Old guard Tony Rogolifoi played in the last three games of DCCA, giving the depleted team quality minutes.

GEC

From Page 28

playoff berths, as Ebisuya (6-2), and University of Loyola (5-2) had already secured the first two tickets to the next round.

Ocampo top-scored for GEC with 39 points, while Yalung chipped in 37. Musni contributed 12, while Danny Illahi and Bobby Geli also finished in double figures with 11 and 10, respectively.

Moises led Ebisuya in its last game in the regular season, tallying 30 markers, while Amor Casabuena added 22.

Casabuena fired three early triples in the first period, lifting Ebisuya to a 29-23 lead. Moises and big man Edwin Santos then took over in the second quarter, combining for 20 points to increase Ebisuya's lead to 16 at the break, 58-42.

Ebisuya still enjoyed a double-digit lead at the end of the third period, 79-66, before it let its guard down in the final quarter, allowing Yalung and company easy shots and sending the game to extra five minutes.

IT&E 105, Saipan Fresh 103

In the open division game, IT&E gained a share of second place with Noni Saipan after outclassing Saipan Fresh Market, 105-103.

Bonbon Cadagat sizzled for 40 points for IT&E, which avenged its first-round loss to Saipan Fresh and improved its record to 4-3. IT&E is already assured of a slot in the playoffs, joining pennant champion Diamond Ali'i (6-1), Noni Saipan (4-3), and Saipan Fresh (3-4), but the last few games in the regular season are still crucial in determining the three teams finals standings.

IT&E began controlling the game in the second quarter behind Cadagat's outside sniping and foiled Saipan Fresh's repeated comeback attempts in the fourth period.

Besides Cadagat, four other IT&E players contributed on offense with Jomary Tumaquip and Peter Mendiola chipping in 12 points apiece. Quincy Johnson had 12, while Alex Lauron drilled 10.

First Game

GEC 118 – Ocampo 39, Yalung 37, Musni 12, Illahi 11, Geli 10, Jalandoni 4, Salazar 3.

Ebisuya 103 – Moises 30, Santos 27, Casabuena 22, Olivos 12, Abuan 8, Peleno 4, Tengco 2.

Scoring by quarters: 22-29, 42-58, 66-79, 103-103, 118-107.

Second Game

IT&E 105 – Cadagat 40, Mendiola 12, Tumaquip 12, Johnson 11, Lauron 10, Dayrit 8, Peredo 8, Moises 3, Tagle 2.

Saipan Fresh 103 – Estolas 34, Pagarao 30, Gapor 18, Ja. Villacrusis 12, Jo. Villacrusis 4, Tumaquip 3, Abuan 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-24, 54-46, 84-74, 105-103.

BARCINAS

From Page 28

Won (17.2 ppg)

In rebounds, Barcinas was fourth with 53, fifth in assists (26), first in steals (40), and tied for second in blocks (4).

Bernardo currently leads the league in rebounds with 66 for a 13.2 average in five games, while Advance's Jun Estolas is the top feeder with 40 assists. Hoopaholics' Mel Manibusan is UBA's human eraser, swatting away eight shots.

Selection for the top performers in the league will be based on the players' statistics and sportsmanship.

In the regular-season MVP selection, each team is allowed to pick a minimum of one and maximum of three players from other squads. After submission, the UBA board of directors and committee members will choose the Top 10 vote getters, who will then vie for the coveted MVP plum.

Spectators will also take part in the selection process, as 100 ballots will be distributed during the playoff week (January 13 to 15) and fans will select from the 10 candidates.

The top performers in the inaugural league will be recognized during the awards ceremony on Jan. 18.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	24	8	.750	–
Toronto	17	18	.486	8 1/2
New York	14	20	.412	11
Philadelphia	10	24	.294	15
New Jersey	3	31	.088	22

Southeast Division

Orlando	24	10	.706	–
Atlanta	21	12	.636	2 1/2
Miami	17	15	.531	6
Charlotte	15	18	.455	8 1/2
Washington	11	21	.344	12

Central Division

Cleveland	27	9	.750	–
Milwaukee	14	18	.438	11
Chicago	14	19	.424	11 1/2
Detroit	11	22	.333	14 1/2
Indiana	11	23	.324	15

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	24	11	.686	–
San Antonio	20	12	.625	2 1/2
Houston	20	15	.571	4
Memphis	17	16	.515	6
New Orleans	16	16	.500	6 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	22	13	.629	–
Portland	22	15	.595	1
Oklahoma City	19	15	.559	2 1/2
Utah	18	16	.529	3 1/2
Minnesota	7	28	.200	15

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	28	6	.824	–
Phoenix	22	13	.629	6 1/2
L.A. Clippers	15	18	.455	12 1/2
Sacramento	14	20	.412	14
Golden State	9	24	.273	18 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Indiana 97, Orlando 90
Charlotte 113, Chicago 108
Washington 104, Philadelphia 97
Milwaukee 98, New Jersey 76
Dallas 98, Detroit 93
Denver 123, Golden State 122
Phoenix 113, Sacramento 109
Memphis 109, Portland 105
L.A. Lakers 88, Houston 79

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

PILCOWA STANDINGS

Open

Diamond	6	1
Noni Saipan	4	3
IT&E	4	3
Saipan Fresh	3	4
NCIC	0	6

Masters

Ebisuya	6	2
University of Loyola	5	2
GEC	3	4
Wushin	2	4
Cool Water	2	5

UBA LEADERS

(As of Dec. 30/After 5 Games)

Scoring

	Total	Ave.
Dan Barcinas, Ol'Aces	121	24.2
Freddie Pelisamen, Advance	94	23.5
Roger Herrera, Trinity	112	22.4
Kae Bernardo, Noni Saipan	100	20
Joo Joong Won, Cholos	88	17.6
J.R. Barrios, Diamond	86	17.5
Jack Lizama, Ol'Aces	70	17.5
Bonbon Cadagat, Prospects	74	16.2
Pete Iguel, Ol'Aces	76	15.2
Wowie Abuel, Noni Saipan	72	14.4
Peter Mendiola, Hoopaholics	57	11.4

Rebounds

Kae Bernardo, Noni Saipan	66
Gyles Ruluked, Hoopaholics	60
Roy Hernandez, Trinity	59
Dan Barcinas, Ol'Aces	53
Chris Paul, Prospects	50
Mel Manibusan, Hoopaholics	47
Bart Demapan, Noni Saipan	46
Mel Capalad, Diamond	46
Peter Mendiola, Hoopaholics	44
Joo Joong Won, Cholos	43
Kelvin Fitial, Advance	43
Jack Lizama, Ol'Aces	43

Assists

Jun Estolas, Advance	40
Bonbon Cadagat, Prospects	34
Wowie Abuel, Noni Saipan	30
Jude Loste, Trinity	29
Dan Barcinas, Ol'Aces	26
Quincy Johnson, Prospects	22
Elmer Esdrelon, Diamond	22
Pete Iguel, Ol'Aces	21
J.R. Barrios, Diamond	19
Roy Hernandez, Trinity	17

Steals

Dan Barcinas, Ol'Aces	40
Dave Palacios, Hoopaholics	17
Wowie Abuel, Noni Saipan	17
Bonbon Cadagat, Prospects	16
Joe Kapileo, Cholos	15
Pete Iguel, Ol'Aces	15
Roger Herrera, Trinity	13
Perry Inos, Prospects	12
J.R. Barrios, Diamond	12
Jack Lizama, Ol'Aces	12
Jose Tumaquip, Ol'Aces	12

Blocks

Mel Manibusan, Hoopaholics	8
Tim Wesley, Diamond	8
Dan Barcinas, Ol'Aces	4
Gabriel White, Ol'Aces	4
Kae Bernardo, Noni Saipan	4
Bart Demapan, Noni Saipan	4
Alex Lauron, Prospects	3
August Loste, Trinity	3
Pando Muleta, Advance	3
Jack Lizama, Ol'Aces	3

2009 IT&E Inter-Government/Business Basketball League Finals

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

DCCA players pose with Brad Ruszala, standing right, of league sponsor IT&E after beating NTT Docomo in the finals of the 2009 IT&E Inter-Government/Business Basketball League on Monday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Players and spectators line up for IT&E's half-court shootout contest for a chance to win a cellular phone.

NTT Docomo's Jun Estolas looks for a teammate to pass the ball to as he is tightly guarded by DCCA's Elias Rangamar.

DCCA's Romei Iginoef forces his way against NTT Docomo's Kae Bernardo, left, and James Villacrusis.

NTT Docomo's James Lee grabs the offensive rebound.

NTT Docomo's Syl Teregeyo drives against DCCA's Taj Van Buren, left, and Tony Rogolifoi.

DCCA's Ponce Rasa goes for a layup against NTT Docomo's James Lee.

NTT Docomo's Kelvin Fitial, second left, pulls up for a shot against DCCA's Taj Van Buren, left, and Elias Rangamar, third left.

DCCA's Taj Van Buren tries to break free from the defense of NTT Docomo's Kae Bernardo.

NTT Docomo' s James Villacrusis, center, loses the ball, as he is fouled by DCCA's Peter Camacho.

NMASA to elect 2010 board today

Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will elect its board of directors during its monthly meeting today beginning at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Randy Johnson retires after 22 seasons

Randy Johnson looked so awkward on the mound early in his career, that shaggy hair dangling down his neck as he fired a blazing fastball in every direction but the strike zone.

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Minor advances to finals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Hopwood Junior High School student Thea Minor made it to the finals of the consolation draw in the 2010 Ducats GV Championships in Shepparton Lawn Tennis Club, in Shepparton, Victoria, Australia.

After winning her first three games in the consolation draw of the girls' 14-and-under singles, Minor was paired against ITF Pacific Oceania teammate Lorish Puluspene of Papua New Guinea in the quarterfinals on Tuesday and won, 8-3.

In the semifinals, the CNMI bet was pitted against tournament eighth seed Hope Curtis-McDonald and pulled off an 8-7 upset to advance to the finals yesterday morning.

Minor's one point win over Curtis-McDonald extended the latter's win streak to five matches before the CNMI netter lost to Australia's Laura Kelley in yesterday afternoon's finals, 4-8.

The tournament in Shepparton was the first of three events in Minor's calendar this month. She debuted in the main draw against Daphne Mantzanidis and lost, 2-6, 3-6, dropping the

See MINOR on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Thea Minor, seen here training with fellow CNMI netters last month on the PIC hardcourt, made it to the finals of the consolation bracket in a tournament in Victoria, Australia, yesterday.

DCCA completes Cinderella finish

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
DCCA's Peter Camacho is chased by NTT Docomo defenders during their title game in the government/business caging on Monday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

From last qualifier to top finisher.

This, in a nutshell, best describes Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' triumph in the recently concluded 2009 IT&E Inter Government/Business Basketball League.

"It was a big comeback for us after a so-so performance in the regular season," DCCA player-coach Elias Rangamar said after an 80-70 victory over NTT Docomo in the finals on Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

DCCA finished the regular season with a dismal 4-7 slate and placed ninth among the 12 teams. Only the Top 8 teams

See DCCA on Page 26

GEC boosts playoff bid

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

GEC Pawnshop survived pennant champion Ebisuya in overtime, 118-107, to strengthen its playoffs chances in the masters division of the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League.

Trailing by as much as 18 points in the first half of their Tuesday night game at the JP Centre Basketball Court, GEC had an explosive fourth quarter to catch up with Ebisuya and pull off a win in the extension period.

GEC scored 37 points in the fourth canto against Ebisuya's 24. Ed Yalung led GEC's attack in the fourth quarter, nailing 18 points. However, it was Alex Ocampo's triple in the dying seconds of regulation that sent the game into overtime, 103-all.

In extension period, Ocampo, Yalung, and Bitoy Musni drilled four points apiece, outscoring the entire Ebisuya crew, who only tallied four points. Ernie Moises and Roland Tengco were the only two Ebisuya players to score in overtime, making two points each.

The victory improved GEC's record to 3-4, a win ahead of Wushin (2-4) and Cool Water. These three teams are fighting for the last two

See GEC on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Ed Yalung, center, drives, against Ebisuya's Edwin Santos, left, and Pasky Peleno during their game in the masters division of the PILCOWA caging on Tuesday at the JP Centre Basketball Court.

Barcinas lords it over in UBA

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Ol'Aces' Dan Barcinas dishes off to a teammate as he is trapped in the baseline by two Hoopaholics defenders during their game in the UBA caging at the Garapan Basketball Court late last month.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

If statistics alone will be the basis for choosing the MVP in the 2009 UBA/Miller Lite Men's Basketball League and the selection is made at this early, Ol'Aces' Dan Barcinas will be a strong candidate.

The former Mt. Carmel School standout made it to the Top 10 in all five statistical races (scoring, rebounds, assists, steals, and blocks), after five games with the Ol'Aces.

Barcinas earned 121 points in five games for a league-leading average of 24.2 points per match. In second place is Advance's Freddie Pelisamen (23.5 ppg), followed by Trinity Estate's Roy Herrera (22.4 ppg), Noni Saipan's Kae Bernardo (20 ppg), and Cholos' Joo Joong

See BARCINAS on Page 26